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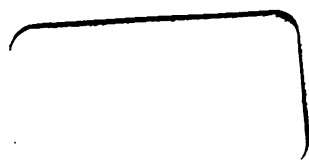
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ON THE HEIGHTS OF HIMALAY



BY
A. VAN DER NAILLEN





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IN THE SANCTUARY, Etc.



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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

The first edition of this work has been received with exceptional favor. Its reception has led the publishers to add, to a new and revised edition, illustrations befitting the text.

The work has appealed most strongly to seekers after light in theosophic thought, and it has supplied a philosophy particularly needed by those who have left beaten and unsatisfactory paths, but who have lacked the confidence to cross the threshold of the more advanced, and therefore more technical, teachers.

The superintendent of an important institution writes: "The ancient mysticism has ever been of interest to me, but heretofore texts which I have read have had no scientific correlate, and in psychological bearings have been void of the ethical considerations on the one hand and the original concept on the other, all of which are so pleasingly conspicuous in this work. Through it I find running—pure as a mountain stream—a sentiment of highest morality."

A Secretary of State writes: "It is written in exceptionally expressive English, and the impressions of occultism are clear-cut, plain and convincing. I

PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

begin to have a more tangible idea of Oriental mysticisms, and the subtle forces of nature so difficult to understand from ordinary texts on the subject."

If, in the busy lives of prominent men, time is found for such expression of approval, it is safe to infer that there are many who approve, even though they have not yet expressed themselves as equally gratified.

Amidst the commendations, there has been an occasional regret that the life of Bishop Angelo was not more closely followed. The opportunities and experiences of such a life cover too broad a field for proper treatment in a volume of this character, and the author promises a continuation, somewhat in the nature of a sequel, which will be a conscientious endeavor to satisfy the demands of those whose love for occult themes leads to a desire for deeper investigations.

THE PUBLISHERS.

PROLOGUE.

ARTHUR CLEMENT DE SILVEREAU was a prince by birth, and of the highest nobility of France. In early manhood, he held the rank of captain in the King's body-guard. He was tall, handsome, martial in carriage, and in manner faultless.

The King of France had a daughter who, though not beautiful, possessed all the attractions which belong to true nobility of soul. She was a human magnet, gathering around her unconsciously, but irresistibly, the good and great, and repelling the sensual and depraved.

The Prince, whose soul seemed, from his childhood, to have been attuned to the harmonies of the Infinite, was always more of a poet than a warrior; more of a dreamer than a commander. His heart was as tender as that of a maiden, and his whole being appeared to ascend to the very heavens, when, from the marble steps of the palace, he stood gazing at the innumerable stars, spangling the skies, on a bright summer night.

It was but natural then that the Prince should be attracted toward the King's daughter. The Princess Dolora had noticed the handsome youth, and both had felt in secret a sentiment which each day grew stronger, but which neither dared avow. In short, they loved, and with the tender, delicate, spiritualized love of which only the pure in heart are capable. But the distance between them was immeasurable; one was the daughter of the most powerful monarch in Europe; the other, a captain in the King's body-guard. Still, week after week, when the Court assembled, and its glittering

throngs filled the reception hall, the eyes of the lovers sought each other, and their gaze evoked the tell-tale blush.

One evening, a fête, somewhat private in character, was given in honor of Dolora's eighteenth birthday. After the festivities, the guests, before retiring, were allowed the privilege of kissing the hand of the Princess. The heart of the Prince beat quickly in expectation of this favor. When his opportunity arrived, every pulse throbbed with excitement, and he felt conscious of his changing color, especially as he observed that the lady showed the same evidence of emotion. The soul of the stricken youth oscillated between hope and fear. Bending one knee, before her, as was the custom of the Court, he raised her hand to his lips, and as he felt it tremble, pressed it slightly. The pressure was returned. His soul was in ecstasy, for he knew that his love was reciprocated.

From that moment the Prince's life was changed. He became one of the happiest of men; but alas! his happiness was of brief duration.

Two weeks later the news was published that the monarch of a neighboring kingdom had asked the French King for his daughter's hand, and that his suit had been favorably received.

The blow fell heavily, and for several days, under pretext of sickness, the Prince stirred not beyond the palace grounds.

On returning to his duties he noticed that the Princess began to absent herself from Court, and naturally inferred that she wished to avoid and perhaps to forget him.

Finally, an entertainment was announced, and it was rumored that Dolora would be present for the last time before the arrival of her royal suitor. At the usual hour,

the Court assembled to receive, with due ceremony, the royal family. As they entered the Prince fixed his gaze on Dolora, and when their eyes met, each read the other's tale of suffering. No matter what might be the consequence, he resolved to speak to her. But this was no easy matter, as the rules of etiquette were rigid, and none of subordinate rank were allowed to address voluntarily any member of the royal family. The Princess was arm in arm with her most intimate friend, the Duchess de Buonaceli, who, understanding the position of the young couple, slowly directed her steps toward the place where the Prince was standing. As they approached, Dolora let fall her lace handkerchief, which he instantly picked up, and with low obeisance presented to her.

The Princess thanked him with a graceful bow, while the Duchess whispered in his ear:

“At one hour after midnight, in the nurse's cottage.”

De Silvereau became pale as death, but recovering himself instantly, moved away, and, without betraying his emotion, resumed his place, while the ladies continued their promenade.

It was nearly twelve o'clock, and the Prince soon afterward returned to his quarters, to divest himself of his uniform, and make preparations for the meeting. His soul was tossed in a maelstrom of conflicting emotions.

The cottage of Dolora's former nurse was almost hidden in a grove of stately trees, at a short distance from the wing of the palace where were the quarters of the royal children.

At half-past twelve Dolora, pleading a severe headache as an excuse, asked leave to return to her apartments, and the Duchess de Buonaceli was deputed to accompany her.

Throwing herself upon a sofa, the unhappy maiden vainly tried to suppress the violent beatings of her heart.

Near her stood the Duchess holding in loving grasp the sufferer's hand, and pressing affectionate kisses on her forehead.

"Dear child," she ejaculated in a tender tone of voice, "I understand too well what you are enduring, for my heart also has been lacerated. But this is the penalty oft imposed upon those occupying high stations—that they shall have no freedom in such matters. The door is too frequently closed to the blessings of reciprocated love, and the enjoyment of that happiness which is within the reach of most members of the human family. But fortunately, the pride of birth, with its becoming dignity, has engrafted on the character of royal personages a power of will that enables them to control the promptings of natural emotion, and courageously bear the cross of their affliction. This strength of mind renders them capable of fulfilling, with honor and fidelity, many painful duties imposed upon them by their high position."

Brushing from her cheeks the silent witnesses of her deep sympathy, she continued :

"Do not change your robes, dear child ; let me wrap this cloak around you, and we will go. But whatever you may suffer, do not forget that you are a princess, and that your father sits upon the throne of France. According to my judgment, it is not only right, but necessary that you should see and speak to De Silvereau, and explain to him that, by a manly submission to the decrees of destiny, he will preserve the honor of his name, and prove himself worthy of your love. This is the best course you can pursue to mitigate the pangs and vain regrets that might otherwise distress you hereafter. It is

but natural to allow thus your first love some expression, and hence do I sanction and aid this interview. By so doing, I believe I am rendering you, my dear Dolora, as well as the Prince and your intended husband, an important service."

The Duchess by no means felt assured as to the soundness of her reasoning, but she knew, at least, that the remembrance of her own first love had purified and strengthened her for the trials of life, had been a bulwark against many temptations, a solace in suffering, a strength in moments of weakness, and a prophecy of joy, if not here, at least hereafter.

Taking Dolora by the hand, she slowly led the maiden down the broad stairway to the gardens. The path was clear, and, as they sallied forth, the stars were shining brightly through the balmy atmosphere of night, Jupiter, Dolora's favorite planet, glistening with surpassing splendor.

After a few minutes' walk, the cottage was reached, and Dolora's arm began to tremble violently. Madame de Buonaceli told her somewhat sternly to remember her lineage and rank!

This appeal nerved the drooping girl. By the aid of a pass-key they entered the dwelling. A light was burning in a sitting-room to the right, and heavy curtains, closely drawn together, prevented any ray of light from being visible outside. Seating themselves on a divan, the Duchess, holding Dolora's hands, was about to address her, when two cautious raps at the entrance door were heard. Overpowered by emotion, Dolora again gave signs of weakness, but her companion tightly grasping the poor girl's wrist, as she pointed to the door, declared that unless she controlled her emotions, the door should not be opened.

When the Princess had regained her composure,

Madame de Buonaceli left the room—all the servants having been dismissed—and opening the outer door bowed politely to the Prince, bidding him enter.

Stepping toward the divan he bent respectfully one knee before her fragile form, and with head inclined, whispered faintly: "My noble Princess!" These were the only words he could utter. His frame shook under the influence of his violent emotion. Meanwhile, Dolora was the very picture of despair. To the Duchess her face vividly recalled the "Mater Dolorosa." Her tear-dimmed eyes were turned upward, while the lines of her delicate mouth were contracted with agony, and her bosom quivered, as though it were about to burst and free itself from some torturing spirit confined within.

"Who," thought the Duchess, "looking merely at the external glitter of royalty, would believe that it is such a juggernaut to its own children, crushing them ruthlessly under the wheels of its pride and pomp? Who, thinking only of the wisdom that potentates must exercise to secure the peace and happiness of their subjects, would believe them capable of tearing the body from the soul, of trampling under foot the best and highest instincts of man, to pamper an inordinate or senseless ambition? Yet thus it is, and thus it will ever be. Alas, for the children, not of the lowly, but of the great!"

The good Duchess, no longer able to control her feelings, intimated to the Prince that it was time to return to the palace, and asked of him to promise solemnly that he would make no attempt to see or meet the Princess Dolora in the future.

Rising to his feet, De Silvereau with head erect and arm extended toward heaven, tried in vain to speak. His tongue seemed paralyzed, and his throat refused to give utterance to a word.

"Prince!" ejaculated Madame de Buonaceli in a stern voice.

Deadly pale, his frame quivering as if ague-stricken, with a supreme effort raising his right hand and looking toward heaven, De Silvereau obeyed; but his words came in sobs.

"I solemnly promise and swear that after this night I will never attempt to see the Princess Dolora, now before me; I further swear that for ten years I will not enter the country of which she is about to become the Queen."

When he had finished speaking, Dolora, unable longer to endure the strain, uttered a feeble cry and sank upon the couch in a swoon.

"Come! come! child; be strong!" said the Duchess, though with tears rolling down her cheeks; "do not yield to this weakness, unworthy of a daughter of France!"

Meanwhile the Prince, sobbing like a child, was passionately kissing the hand of Dolora who, at length returning to consciousness, looked at him with such unutterable love that Madame de Buonaceli became alarmed.

Divesting herself of a golden locket set with diamonds, containing the portrait of the Princess, she gave it to De Silvereau.

Then she commanded him to bid adieu to the Princess.

The lovers, overcome with emotion, fell into each other's arms, but instantly the Duchess interfered. De Silvereau imprinted his last kiss on Dolora's lips. It was one of those kisses with which one's whole soul seems to pass away forever!

The Duchess carried, rather than led Dolora to her apartments, while the Prince, staggering like one intoxi-

cated, wandered away into the royal gardens, he knew not whither.

Poor stricken lovers !

The next day, the young Prince begged a private audience of the King, who supposing that the young captain wanted to see him on military matters, readily granted the request.

The Prince made known his desire to be dismissed from military service, as he intended to take holy orders forthwith. The Monarch showed the utmost amazement, looking at him from head to foot, as if to discover the cause of his strange request.

"Well ! well ! Captain," exclaimed his Majesty, "are you really serious—or is it a freak of momentary insanity, or perhaps of disappointed love, for you have the reputation, Prince, of being a favorite with the ladies. Come, come, you are jesting."

"I respectfully beg your Majesty to believe that I have never been more serious in all my life. I mean to retire from the world and to consecrate my existence to the service of God. On no other account would I leave the service of your Majesty."

The King again remonstrated, remarking that he looked pale, wearied and sick ; that all he needed was a month's furlough to rest and recuperate. But De Silver-eau adhered firmly to his purpose, and seeing this the monarch kindly said that he would never dissuade any one from consecrating his life to God. On the Prince's intimation that he intended to proceed direct to Rome to see the Holy Father, the King gave him a letter for his Holiness.

Hardly had the young captain left the palace when the Princess was announced. The King, who had summoned her, said that he had received dispatches from her future husband, declaring that a reception, worthy

of her station, was being prepared in honor of her marriage. The monarch added that he would have her conducted to the frontier of her new kingdom in regal style, with an escort brilliant enough for the daughter of any monarch in the world.

This reminded him of De Silvereau's resignation, and having told Dolora of the Prince's motives, added that he must commission at once a new captain for his body guard. On hearing this Dolora staggered. "Why, what is the matter, my child?" asked the monarch.

"Oh! it is nothing, a fluttering of the heart," said the poor girl, trying to recover herself.

For a moment the King looked intently at his daughter, and then, as if a light had dawned on him, exclaimed:

"Dolora, I am almost afraid to imagine. Is another drama to be enacted in the royal family of France, another sacrifice to be made?"

The girl remained motionless and white as marble, looking her father straight in the face.

"Dolora, speak!"

"I cannot speak," she feebly whispered, and then added in a firmer tone of voice: "Whatever my fate may be, happy or unfortunate, your Majesty may rest assured, that your daughter will always remember that the 'Lily' is the emblem of her coronet."

The monarch arose, took his child by the hand, kissed her more tenderly than he had ever done before, and brushing a tear from his eye, silently, and with bowed head, conducted her to the door of his apartment. He looked at her as she slowly retired through the hall, and when she had disappeared, re-entered his apartment and wept bitterly. Dearly he loved his daughter, for her qualities of soul and purity of life;

but never until now had he thus shown his affection, deeming such emotion unbecoming to a monarch.

"And, to give," he muttered, "such an angel, to a licentious profligate, like that king!"

The same evening, a special mail coach, with six horses, was waiting for De Silvereau before his quarters at the palace. Presently he appeared, wrapped in a heavy cloak that hid his features.

"Whither, your Excellency?" asked the chief postilion, as he opened the door of the coach and gave the military salute.

"Rome!" laconically replied the Prince, stepping into the vehicle. The door closed. He had said good-bye forever to the world which had treated him so cruelly. Henceforth, its joys, its glories, and its triumphs, its bliss and woe, its love and hatred should be to him as a forgotten dream, powerless and unregarded.

As the horses sped swiftly through the court-yard, amid the usual cheers of the throng, a lady concealed behind the curtains of an apartment in the royal nursery, fell swooning into the arms of an attendant. Poor Dolora!—Poor Duchess de Buonaceli!—

Exactly one month later, festivities of unusual magnificence were celebrated in the capital of a small nation adjoining the realm of France. Cannon thundered forth their salutes, flags waved from every house-top, military and civic bands played national and martial airs, and chimes were rung from all the church-steeple of towns and villages. Everywhere was joy, festivity, and happiness. A nation was in holiday attire.

The Princess was standing at the altar of the great cathedral. Beside her stood the King, to whom she was being given in marriage. The crown of his kingdom was placed on her marble brow, and Dolora was a Queen!

At the very hour when these festivities were in progress, in a little Italian village hidden in the rocks of the mountain, bells were also ringing, music was being played, and songs were being sung. Through the Gothic windows of an ancient cloister of Trappist Friars issued the strains of an organ, accompanying a solemn anthem. The friars, in their long, dark-brown robes, each holding a wax candle, were slowly walking around a bier, upon which lay an open coffin. Around it were twelve lighted candles supported by massive candelabra, and on each of them a human skull and cross-bones.

The Abbot or chief of the monks, wore his official robes of black, with a large white cross on the back. As he walked in procession with the friars around the coffin, he chanted in solemn and melancholy voice, that sad anthem for the dead, "*Dies Iræ, Dies Illa*," the brethren singing in chorus. At intervals he sprinkled holy water on the casket. And still the bells rang and the organ played, and still the Abbot and the friars continued their solemn chant; its notes wafted through the still air, low, sad, and distant.

But who was it that was dead? Who was the man lying wax-like in that coffin, over which were held these ceremonies? Though but the shadow of his former self, it was the Prince, the ex-captain of the body-guard of the King of France.

The Abbot approaches the coffin while all the friars gather slowly around it. He speaks in grave and measured tones.

"Prince Arthur Clement de Silvereau, the service of the dead has been read over thee; thou art in thy coffin, dead to the world, to its honors, its joys, its attractions. The pleasures of sense exist for thee no longer; the pleasures only of the divine Spirit must henceforth and

forever be thine! Dost thou promise forever to remain true and faithful to this work?"

"I do solemnly so promise!" answered the Prince, still lying in his coffin.

With the help of two friars, the Prince arose, stepped out of the coffin, and stood erect.

"Thy name is Angelo," said the Abbot, "and thou wilt bear it forever."

Immediately, the large organ began to play the "*Te Deum*," all the friars joining in the inspiring hymn. The blended harmonies of organ and voice were soul-entrancing; and as he listened, Friar Angelo appeared to rally; his eyes grew brighter, and in them was a gleam of light and hope. Soon he joined in the singing, and slowly, with the other friars, disappeared within the cold, dark hall-ways of the cloister. The iron doors swung heavily upon their hinges, closing with a dull and hollow sound.

CHAPTER I.

THE district of Simla, in India, situated in the foothills of the lower Himalayas, is one of the most picturesque spots on earth. Around it are deep valleys bordered by mountains whose slopes are hidden by dense forests of cedar almost to the limit where perpetual snow forbids vegetation. The scenery is grand beyond description. On one side are the eternal glaciers, covering the crests of the majestic Himalayas, and sharply outlined by the brilliant Indian sky; on the other the shining waters of the beautiful river Sutlej, meandering through immense and fertile plains, completing one of the fairest panoramas that human eye can rest on.

On one of the mountain spurs of this little paradise and in one of its most secluded nooks, is built the city of Simla, known for its unsurpassed climate—cool, exhilarating and congenial to man, from whatever country he may have travelled. The streets of this as yet small city, are full of traffic; simple shepherds of Thibet exchanging skins for grain and other necessities; among them Panjab hillmen with their characteristic Aryan features, beaming with kindness and good-feeling, accompanied by beautiful and gaily attired women, purchasing golden trinkets; with perhaps a native prince mounted on his handsome steed and followed by a retinue of horseman; all this tide of humanity, flanked by a line of camels or ox-carts moving in the narrow streets, bordered with quaint bazaars and odd-looking wooden houses with their bright red paint, forms a scene worthy of the brush of a Jules Breton or a Bierstadt.

Aside from the business street are the bungalows, inhabited by foreigners and well-to-do people; transient residents in search of health in a cool climate, during the broiling heat of the Indian summer months.

In one of these comfortable bungalows, lives a Roman Catholic Bishop, much esteemed by all the people of the Panjab, for his benevolence and learning. Owing to a thorough classical and scientific education, to the autographic letter of his monarch to the Pope, and to his rank of Prince, to which must be added, his force of intellect and character, De Silvereau had risen very rapidly in the Trappist order. At the end of ten years, we find him a Bishop in the city of Simla, where he was in charge of all the missions.

His stay in India had a marked influence upon the life of the Prince-bishop. Living in the land of mysticism, amid born mystics, eager inquirers into the secrets of nature and the mysteries of the Divine, amid profound thinkers, close reasoners and observers, he could not help becoming, by degrees, influenced by such environment.

The Hindoo (we speak, of course, of the educated classes), is a life-long student, a natural metaphysician and transcendentalist. The unknowable does not exist for him. He bows his head in profound adoration only before the all-knowing, incomprehensible, eternal Parabrahm, the unconditioned, the infinite.

The climate of India is sultry, enervating, and unfavorable to physical exertion. But if the body is at times forced to remain idle, it is not so with the brain; this is always active in the Hindoo, and its activities are directed to the speculative. Self, its possibilities and destiny, is the subject that lies uppermost in his meditation. So it can readily be seen that his most earnest study aims at the solution of our own knotty west-

ern philosophical problem, "Whence? Why? and Whither?"

The most important of the Hindoo sacred writings antedate by several centuries the era of Christ. They are of a mystic nature, and the spirit of all of them is the doctrine of renunciation. Renunciation of all earthly things, of all that belongs to the senses, the Hindoo considers an indispensable preliminary to the exaltation of the spirit, or the liberation of the human soul from its earthly fetters. Once delivered from the empire of the senses, the soul attains its higher powers. These sacred writings set forth that man is composed of seven distinct parts, resolving themselves, however, into three, the body, the spirit and the soul. The body is the transient, the unreal. The body is not the man, it is only his earthly tenement, an inn by the wayside, which the real, the eternal man inhabits for a few years, to gain the experience which human life commands, and thereby obtain additional qualities preparatory to the next higher stage of existence. The soul is the only real self, the everlasting one. The spirit is the body of the soul in the supersensuous world—for us the next; but to the Hindoo, the next world is already present. Since he considers time as indivisible, there is but one world, containing everything, manifest and unmanifest, the present world in which we live, and move and have our being, and which is eternal. "The unmanifest in this world," says the Hindoo, "man can enjoy in life as well as after death. What is death? The deliverance of the soul from the body, the separation of the eternal from the material." The devout Brahman or Buddhist says: "Deliver your souls from all the attractions or qualities which the body imposes upon them; earthly attractions; sensual pleasures; worldly ambition; desire of possessions; in other words, raise your soul so far

above the body, that it has no sympathy or affinity for it, other than to maintain a magnetic connection for the preservation of life." Thus elevated and delivered, it will enjoy all the qualities and attributes of the pure soul. It will be able to travel at will, instantly, to any place, however distant, and there make itself visible. It can read the thoughts of men. It can influence men for good, by instilling into them lofty ideas. The soul that is liberated will pass through matter as if matter did not exist, and will even control matter, so as to produce what we western people call abnormal phenomena or miracles, but what the Hindoo asserts are simply the result of a superior knowledge of the higher laws of nature, and which every disciplined and educated human being can produce as well as he, if he be duly prepared.

The Hindoos, moreover, declare that happiness in this, our every-day life, is possible only to the disciples of their philosophy, the Brahman and the Buddhist. They assert (truly enough, as it seems), that all pain results from desires unsatisfied, ambitions ungratified, or worldly aspirations unfulfilled. In order to avoid pain, they preach, as stated before, the doctrine of Renunciation. Have no desires ; nurse no ambitions ; purify your aspirations, and you will have no pain. All these qualities, as they call them, belong to the life of the senses, and with the senses must perish.

"Wouldst thou be happy? Lay up treasures which benefit the soul," they exclaim. These, and these only, contain no deception, and are conducive to true and lasting happiness. Live in the eternal. Aspire after that which is enduring. Enwrap thyself in the bosom of Parabrahm, the alpha and omega of all things, the omni-conscient, the all-powerful, the all in all !

Bishop Angelo had resided in Simla for ten years, and

now he found himself deeply interested in the philosophy, sacred writings, and religious system of the Hindoos. This religion, he found, constituted a genuine brotherhood, whose members, unconstrained, except by their own free will, were always helpful one to another. The priests walked barefoot in the street, owning absolutely nothing but the garments that covered their bodies. Here, at last, he saw practice conform to preaching; profession and belief united to an earnest endeavor to be rather than to seem. To attain an irreproachable character based upon the loftiest spiritual aspirations, was the constant and earnest endeavor during his whole life, of the wise and humble follower of Buddha.

The Hindoo believes in re-incarnation or re-embodiment. He believes that, when a certain amount of cosmic matter, after having traversed all the lower kingdoms, mineral, vegetable, and animal, has at last arrived at the state of progression and refinement where it becomes man, this man must stay upon earth until he has outgrown the earth: meaning that man must acquire, here below, all the experiences and development of which his earthly nature is capable. Until this is done, until the soul has reached such purity and height; until it has become so refined and spiritualized as not to retain the least affinity for earth and its belongings, it must return to earth and go through the ordeal of re-incarnation. This re-birth takes place repeatedly, until the soul's liberation or deliverance becomes an accomplished fact; for man's destiny, as the Hindoo philosopher believes, is to develop from the animal up to God, to Parabrahm.

This doctrine of re-incarnation (so unpalatable at first to western minds) is elaborately explained by the Buddhist and shown to harmonize with the principles of absolute justice.

Thus the Buddhist considers every human being on

the road to deliverance or perfection, each one occupying a stage more or less advanced, in harmony with his individual development. When he hears of a man having committed a wrong act, the first thing impressed on his mind is the low, undeveloped condition in which his guilty brother dwells, and this creates immediately a feeling of commiseration and sympathy. Thus, there is no slander, no vilification, no ill-feeling, but a grand and noble desire to help and uplift the poor, benighted, wrong-doing soul. This beautiful side of the Buddhist's character, Bishop Angelo was never tired of studying and admiring. It was indeed very different from what he had ever experienced in the communities of the old world. There, slander, backbiting, and all uncharitableness were indulged in unceasingly.

The Buddhist esteems above all things the peace of his soul; a calm, profound peace, originating in an unalterable confidence in the Infinite; a loving trust in the all-wise, all-just Providence of the Divine Ruler. Such a peace is intensely desired and sought after by the devout Brahman or Buddhist.

Hence, if any ill-feeling or resentment were entertained in the bosom of the disciple, it would disturb the peace of his soul, temporarily affect his connection with his God, lower him in the scale of being, and retard him on his upward road—a calamity, in the estimation of the Buddhist, the greatest that can befall the inhabitant of earth.

Another phase of Hindoo life, which deeply interested the worthy Bishop, was magic or occult power. Exhibitions of this power were of almost daily occurrence in the streets of Simla; nor could he at first account for them. Were they, he asked himself, merely clever tricks of ledgerdemain, or (as the fakirs persistently asserted), the result of secret agencies exercised by the

performers? Fain would he solve this problem, and he felt assured that his sense of observation, sharpened by a scientific education, would furnish a key to its solution.

The performance—common in India—of piercing a basket with a sharp sword, while a child lay within, sorely puzzled his Reverence. One day he invited a *fakir* to his residence, a handsome but plainly furnished bungalow, surrounded by the usual verandah, from which to the street, about one hundred feet distant, stretched a green lawn, with the grass cut short. On this lawn, the *fakir* was asked to perform. He consented, and first of all, while muttering some prayer or incantation, or reciting some manthrams, motioned a little boy, about five years old, to sit down upon the grass. The Bishop drew close to the lad and examined him carefully, to make sure that he was indeed of flesh and blood; but the boy himself settled that question by laughing irreverently in his face. The *fakir*, still muttering his prayers, placed the basket over the youngster, hiding him entirely from view, its inverted rim encircling the lad completely.

Then, moving a few paces backward, (but without losing sight of the basket for a moment) to the place where a long, sharp sword was lying, he squatted on the grass for the space of perhaps ten minutes, gazing on the basket with all the energy that could dwell in human eye. At length, leaping to his feet with a sudden start, and at the same time grasping the sword, he ran toward the basket, and with a sharp thrust passed the weapon clear through it, the point appearing on the other side. Pausing for a moment, and with eyes fixed on his Reverence, as he noted meanwhile, not without an air of satisfaction, the fear depicted in his features, with a sudden jerk he lifted the basket, the sword still piercing it, and lo! the boy had vanished.

The Bishop's astonishment almost prevented him from

hearing the joyous shouts of the lad, who was now leaping through the street gate, and a moment afterwards standing before him, was fully recognized. After receiving a piece of silver, the fakir retired, smiling and with profuse salutations.

For an instant his Reverence remained standing on the lawn, gazing intently at the spot where the boy had disappeared. Approaching it almost mechanically, he pressed his foot upon the grass, and then returned to the verandah of his bungalow, where, seating himself in a large Indian chair, he was soon absorbed in reverie. "How did that boy disappear from under the basket?" was the question he constantly put to himself, but without getting nearer to a solution. "I know every spot on that lawn, and I myself selected one for the performance. The boy did not disappear through the ground; nor did he fly through the air. I can find only two explanations of this mystery. Either I have been psychologized by the fakir, or if not, I have witnessed the operation with all my senses in their normal condition. In the latter case, the fakir must really have the power he asserts—to de-materialize the boy, and then to re-materialize him."

The Bishop could not sleep that night, for two main thoughts disturbed him. The first was: "If any wandering fakir can thus psychologize me, can completely nullify my senses, and that, even without my knowledge and in broad daylight, of what consequence is my life? Ah, if it were so, I would not remain in this miserable world a day longer." The Prelate, however, crossed himself at this impious thought, emanating probably from the old Adam still lurking within. The second sleep-opposing thought was: "If a human being can acquire such power over matter, over organized, living, breathing matter, aye, over other human beings, then there must

lie dormant in the human body, mind, or soul, possibilities of which we Europeans have no conception. I will, I must, investigate this absorbing subject further. I must know the truth ! ”

A few weeks later there appeared in Simla a conjurer renowned far and wide for his performances. He was reputed especially for his feat—one well known in India—of causing the instantaneous growth of the Mango-tree. Through the influence of some Buddhists of note, the Bishop obtained an interview with the conjurer, who, it seems, was not always approachable, as he belonged to some high order of mystics, where much of his time was employed in meditation in sundry exercises of yoga discipline, and the like. It was, however, agreed that the conjurer should come the next day to the Bishop's residence and give an exhibition of his power, as an express favor to the head of the Roman Catholic church in India. The Prelate and his coadjutor were to be present, and no others. “ If psychology is to be the means,” said the former, “ he will have to psychologize two this time ! ”

The next day the fakir came at the appointed time, and he came alone as was customary. His appearance was striking, with bare chest, arms, and legs, the left arm erect in air. The Bishop had been told that this fakir had spent several years in the jungle as a hermit ; that during this time he had kept his left arm steadily in an upright position, regardless of the excruciating pain which it produced. This was done in order to develop an intense will-power. He had remained in that posture until his arm had withered and stiffened at the joints, so that he could no longer lower it. He had also kept his hand clasped, and the nail of his little finger had completely pierced through the palm and curled up on the other side. The suffering this man must have undergone

is to us incomprehensible. Still, if we may believe the statements of these people, they suffer very little, the power of their will entirely dominating the body, so that its pains are little felt.

This strength of will, the mystic claims, is the agent of all occult manifestations. "Matter obeys the will," they say. Mind is the absolute master of matter, and makes it obey its commands.

The Bishop was fully prepared to receive the conjurer. He had selected for the occasion, with his own hands, a flower-pot, with a few shovelfulls of good, black mold, and a seed of squash, with a leaf of a new and perfectly distinguishable shape. This one seed he had taken from an assortment which he had just received from France, of a kind then unknown in India but soon to be transplanted.

The Bishop conducted his visitor to a certain spot which he had selected on the lawn, where he knew that no confederates could be concealed. The Hindoo commenced, as did the other fakir, by muttering prayers in a monotonous tone of voice. Meanwhile, he took the earthen flower-pot in his hand, and after rubbing it all over, set it upon the grass. He next took the black soil, still muttering prayers, but of other purport, crushed the earth, reducing it almost to dust, and then filled the flower-pot. During these operations, the Bishop and his coadjutor had kept their faces within twenty inches of the magician's hands and were absolutely certain that nothing but earth was being put into the flower-pot. His naked arms and body rendered this a comparatively easy task.

"Now," said the performer, moving a few steps away, "plant any seed you wish, and I shall try to make it grow."

The Bishop took the seed of squash, placed it deep in

the black mold, and covered it over with the same soil, turning his back to the Hindoo, so that he could not even see what kind of seed he planted—the coadjutor faithfully watching.

“The seed is planted,” said the Prelate.

“Take any stick that comes to hand and place it in the pot,” answered the conjurer.

Thereupon his Reverence pulled out a stake supporting a rose bush near by, and pushed it to the bottom of the flower-pot.

“It is done,” he said.

“Get me a thin piece of cloth to hang over the stick and large enough to cover the whole pot,” demanded the mystic.

The coadjutor went to the bungalow, and brought with him about a square yard of white muslin.

“Hang that cloth over the stick, in such a way that it covers the pot,” said the conjurer, still keeping himself at a distance.

His order was promptly obeyed.

“Every thing is now ready,” said the Hindoo, approaching within two feet of the covered flower-pot. “I must ask both of you to remain perfectly quiet; not to utter a word or sound; if possible not even to move; and above all not to touch the flower-pot unless I so order.”

“You shall be obeyed,” answered the coadjutor.

The conjurer gradually assumed the appearance of a man in deep meditation, of one whose mind was intensely concentrated, his eyes staring fixedly at the cloth-covered flower-pot. His body moved to and fro in cadence with the intonations of his mysterious mutterings. His one arm was pressed upon his breast. The three actors were within three feet of each other. The Bishop and his colleague were watching intently the

proceedings. By a previous agreement, one devoted all his attention to the magician, while the other kept his eyes immovably fixed upon the flower-pot.

A quarter of an hour went by and the fakir had not changed his position. Half an hour passed and he was still in the same posture. His eyes, however, seemed to have lost their brilliancy, and to gaze inwardly rather than outwardly. His face had assumed a stern, cataleptic aspect ; he appeared to be entirely unconscious.

Three quarters of an hour elapsed, and the fakir had become entirely motionless ; his mutterings had ceased, his features and eyes wore a moribund appearance. He was either dead or in a death-like trance. Still the Bishop and his companion maintained their watch—they knew the time was near.

And now the two spectators became a little anxious. They inwardly wished for the end of the performance. Their anxiety, however, was soon allayed, as a long, deep, heavy breathing issued from the brown, naked chest of the fakir. After a few minutes his eyes resumed their natural appearance. He slowly moved his one arm, and pointing it toward the flower-pot, while looking at the Bishop, exclaimed in a guttural voice “uncover !”

The Bishop, deeply agitated, raised the white cloth from the point where it rested on the stick. Slowly lifting it he disclosed to view a vine about six inches long, and of the cucurbitacé or squash tribe. A small flower was also discovered on the vine, but of a singular color for a plant of that family ; it was a delicate pink, and immediately recognized as characteristic of the species which had been imported from France.

The magician made low salutations and was about to leave, when the Bishop offered him a piece of gold. To the astonishment of the latter, the fakir refused with a sad smile, remarking gravely :

"No, no, I have not performed before thee for money, my brother, but for a higher purpose. Thou art one of the chosen. Heaven has bestowed great gifts upon thee, and thou hast been selected to do a great and noble work for humanity. Thou shalt see thy servant again." Thus saying, he turned upon the Prelate his singularly penetrating eyes.

"It is my earnest wish, to converse with you about the abnormal powers which, I must honestly confess, you seem to possess," said the Bishop.

"Your servant will return hither to-morrow, toward evening," answered the fakir with respectful salutations.

It can easily be imagined in what condition was the mind of the worthy Bishop after the strange performance and mysterious prediction of the Hindoo.

It was late at night when he entered his dwelling ; but instead of going to his bedroom, he sought the library, and throwing himself into the cushioned arm-chair in front of his desk, was soon lost in meditation, his head bent and his arms folded. What he had just seen overthrew apparently all the doctrines of physics and science, of that science he knew so well, and of which he was so proud, believing it to be the only means whereby God works out unceasingly his wonderful design of creation, viz : the eternal evolution of matter into spirit. His aim through life had been to demonstrate that science and religion are in harmony ; that the apparent antagonism between them is due to man's narrow estimate of the scope of each.

The Bishop, who was a thorough scientist, and had become a profound philosopher since he entered holy orders, knew that to reconcile religion with science he must take broader and higher ground than either theologian or scientist, and that the former must supplement his biblical learning with demonstrated and unalter-

able facts, if he would prove that an eternal harmony exists between them, and that the one is really the complement of the other.

Thus Angelo's recent experience seemed to give a new direction to his philosophy, and to introduce into his world of thought, an element whose place he could not as yet determine.

"Is it illusion on my part; is it a simple trick, the thought of which should be quickly dismissed from any serious mind; or can man acquire powers of which the scientific world has, at present, no intimation?" were again the questions he asked of himself.

The Prelate was fairly bewildered. He was of a very emotional nature, more so even than the average Frenchman, and thoughts of the most incoherent and discouraging nature coursed rapidly through his brain. He saw his scientific theories overthrown; the basis of his lifelong studies annihilated; and that apparently by a couple of Hindoo mountebanks.

"Oh, no, no," he exclaimed; "all this is illusion. I must be losing my reason."

Then, seeking solace in prayer, he knelt on the cushioned bench of his prayer-desk, at the foot of a small altar, on which was an image of the thorn-crowned Jesus, and thus he invoked divine aid:

"O, my God, the Creator and Ruler of all things, for whom no mystery exists; thou, who knowest all, grant me thy divine aid; let a ray of thy light shine upon the troubled brain of thy servant; let me see thy holy truth; remove the veil from my eyes; calm my throbbing heart; lead me to thy hidden ways. To thee have I vowed my whole life, devoting it to thy service. Grant me light, I pray thee, that I may the better serve thee!"

Since the parting interview with his beloved Dolora, his soul had not been so disturbed.

Though the sufferings of the Prince were intense, it was only because he was a sincere and ardent lover of truth. In his sacred office he wished to preach the truth only, and therefore desired to know it, if possible; for to him, who loved his divine Master, Truth was God, and God was Truth.

His tears were not the tears of weakness or disappointment; they were the outpourings of a great soul to the Infinite; the heart-rending cry of an agonized spirit thirsting for truth!—an earnest longing for a higher and more positive knowledge of the occult laws of nature, of that world of higher forces and potencies, the possibility of which had just been revealed to him! How was it that such a man, a scientist, a philosopher, a theologian, could be so affected by the disappearance of a child from under a basket and the mere sprouting (mysterious though it was) of a little plant in a flower-pot? We will venture to say, that it is just because he was a scientist, philosopher and theologian, and perhaps, above all, because he was thoroughly honest, that he became so deeply affected by the phenomena just described. Like all true men, he had the courage begotten of conviction, and in honest conviction is a power that no man can withstand. He knew that he could trust his own power of observation, his own common-sense. He knew also that there had been no trickery in the conjurer's performance on the lawn, and he had the manhood to acknowledge it to himself, although the admission greatly disturbed his peace of mind.

After breathing forth his prayer, the good Bishop regained his composure, and with a full belief in its efficacy retired to his chamber, and slept calmly notwithstanding the mental strain.

The next day, at the appointed time, the conjurer made his appearance and was welcomed. When both

were seated in the library, the Brahman at once opened the conversation, as if perfectly aware of all the mental sufferings the Prelate had undergone during the previous night.

“ You have earnestly asked for light, and your request will be granted. Truth will be given to you, as by degrees you can receive it. For a period of fifteen years you have been preparing yourself, unconsciously perhaps, for its reception. Your pure and ascetic life, your abstinence from animal food, your meditations, your ardent desire to know the truth for truth’s sake, and to give it to your fellowmen, all have fitted you for initiation into the higher mysteries of nature.”

“ Yes, I wish ardently to know the truth in all matters having the least bearing upon life, and upon the duties and destiny of man. But how can we arrive at an understanding of what you call occult or hidden truths? How can science ever deal with them so as to arrive at satisfactory conclusions? ”

“ If material science has not discovered hitherto the laws underlying occultism, whose fault has it been? Are we to blame if the forces employed for our mysterious performances (as you are pleased to term them) cannot be reduced in a crucible, dissected by the scalpel, or weighed in an atomic scale? Far other means, which will soon be at your command, are necessary for their investigation and comprehension. Furthermore, as a theologian you are aware that there are two ways of arriving at Truth: Science and Faith. Faith commences where Science, confessedly baffled, leaves off. Nearly every theology plainly states that, through Faith, the human soul can arrive at the understanding of God, and consequently of the divine laws by which the Universe is governed. But how this knowledge is to be obtained

or what amount of faith is necessary as the instrument of its attainment, the theologians do not tell."

"It is so; but it is emphatically taught in our theological seminaries that the Pope of Rome has the spiritual insight of heavenly things, and hence derives his infallibility."

"We know that in some secret corner of the Vatican library is deposited a manuscript given to one of the first Popes, by the highest and last Hierophant of Egypt. This manuscript contains a full description of spiritual exercises, rules for personal discipline and purity; for fasting, prayer, meditation, seclusion, silence, and many other requisites for spiritual illumination, and the opening of the soul to the divine communion. If the Popes of Rome observe the rules laid down in the sacred manuscript, they must undoubtedly have divine illumination; but if their main endeavors lie in building up the temporal powers of the Church, they will never attain that greatest boon to man, spiritual gifts, divine intuition, and communion with Parabrahm, or the Infinite Spirit of the Universe."

"I am sure," answered the Bishop reverently, "that the Holy Fathers, occupying the seat of Saint Peter, consecrate their whole lives to the service of the Heavenly Father."

"I hope so," answered the Brahman, with a sad smile.

"When I took holy orders," continued the Bishop, "and was confined in an Italian monastery for two years, subject to the strictest rules of discipline and purification, prayer, fasting, castigation, absolute silence, profound meditation upon God, I sometimes thought that a divine influx reached my soul, that truths of a higher order flowed to my understanding; and sometimes I felt, as if some spiritual visitor kept me company in my cell."

"I am aware of your spiritual nature and of all its

possibilities, and so are the Masters of the Himalayas. They know you to be worthy, and invite you to their mountain retreat, there to become initiated in Eastern wisdom. No one, no matter how powerful or learned he may be, can enjoy this privilege, unless he be eligible on other grounds. The Masters comprehend the exact worth of the vibrations they feel in the astral light. They heard your prayer, appreciate your character and attainments, and they bid you come. This invitation is the grandest boon that a human being can receive in this world. You will discover there, to your great satisfaction perhaps, that occultism is but a higher knowledge of a series of natural laws, which materialistic science has, so far, disdained to investigate. Occultism, as you will see, disappears where understanding enters. I repeat that it is simply by means of a thorough knowledge of the higher laws of nature, by a perfect comprehension of its most subtle forces, that all these so-called miracles or magical performances can take place."

"This is indeed very natural and consoling to a scientific mind."

"Your Reverence knows very well that, as soon as we arrive at the full understanding of any of the laws of nature, we obtain perfect mastery over all substances, things, or beings controlled by those laws. When the laws of steam became known, we yoked that force, and compelled it to do a very large part of our work upon earth. When the laws of electricity were well understood, we imprisoned that 'genie' also, and when we released it, commanded it to carry our messages thousands of miles over land and sea, and most faithfully has it served us. When the laws of optics were thoroughly established, we constructed eyes forty feet long, and directing them toward the heavens, discovered by their aid, many wondrous things concerning those brilliant

little orbs dotting the vast expanse above ; we saw that they were not golden tacks put there by God to hold up the blue curtain of the skies, but that they were moving bodies like our sun, encircled by and illuminating many opaque masses like our own earth. Through the knowledge of the same laws of vision we constructed the microscope, which revealed to us whole worlds of animated beings, of whose existence we had not the least intimation before."

The Bishop looked at his companion in mute astonishment.

"These occult forces, when known, follow the general law of things. They become part of the domain of man, whom they must and do obey.—But," continued the Brahman in a solemn manner, "as with steam and electricity, so it is with these forces ; they say to us : ' Man, thou hast imprisoned us ; thou hast taken us from the free realm of God and nature, our primal and proper place, to be thy slaves and do thy bidding : but mark well, O man, we shall obey thee only as far as thy commands conform to the laws of our existence ; and if thou dost not respect those laws, we will kill thee ! "

And true it has proved ; many good and worthy men have lost their lives by steam and electricity, not having conformed to the inner laws of these forces. " And," said the Brahman, in a more solemn voice, " so it is eminently with the forces of occultism. They either obey or they kill ; or what is worse perhaps, they render insane, and many are, at this moment, their victims."

And now were heard the silvery tones of a number of tiny bells, apparently near the ceiling of the room. The sounds were of peculiar sweetness, unlike anything the Bishop had ever heard.

"These chimes," said the Brahman, "are the astral bells of my Master at Thibet, indicating that he wishes

to converse with me. I must go home, for he will soon visit me in his astral body. This method of notification seems to astonish you. Still, it is a simple one to the initiated ; it is performed by means of vibrations thrown into the Akasa. The well developed and thoroughly educated brain can throw vibrations, and make their influence felt at any distance. To give you at least a superficial understanding of this Akasa, I may say that it contains the very vital principles of everything in the Universe, as the photosphere of the sun contains the various metals in a gaseous condition. For instance, take an iron nail ; direct upon it the two poles of an electric battery, composed of perhaps one hundred powerful elements, and in a minute or so it will be dissolved and disappear. Where is it ? It has become Akasa ; and thus, as this Akasa now contains all the principles of this evaporated nail, so it contains the elements of all existing things."

"This is very extraordinary," said the Bishop. Still, he felt much pleased to find that, after all, this mysterious occultism took a decidedly scientific turn.

"To further illustrate to you how these so-called mysterious forces operate, let us image that, by some means, we can abstract from the Akasa, all the principles and elements of this nail, and bring them together into this room, then this very nail would be reconstructed, become visible and palpable once more. Do you understand ?"

"I do."

"And thus many feats of occultism are effected."

"This is a little vague. What agent could condense, as you intimate, out of your Akasa, these principles and elements of existence ?"

"A certain kind of vibration transmitted through the human brain. The possibilities of the brain of man are absolutely unbounded ; also that the sphere of action and

potentialities of astral vibrations are likewise unlimited. Your scientists commence to realize the very important rôle that vibrations play in light, sound, heat, electricity, magnetism; but we positively know that each and every manifestation of this material Universe, from the decomposition of the mineral, to the formation, growth, and evolution of all plants, animals, human and celestial beings, takes place through vibrations; that all motion of every kind and nature is originally produced by vibrations; and that as all is motion, so all is vibration. To possess the secret of the production of these vibrations, to have them under our control, is to have the key to all the occult forces of the Universe. God alone has the key to all these vibrations, and through them he evolves worlds. The Masters of the Himalayas have the key to many; hence their power of performing miracles, as the unlearned would call them."

"This is very rational indeed, and perhaps science may some day prove that you are right; the theory is well worth the consideration—it requires in fact, only the verification."

"That verification was given to you yesterday, upon your lawn. The growth of the vine in the flower-pot, was caused by vibratory motion. Vibrations of different kinds were certainly put into motion, as of electricity, sunlight, Akasa, and of the elements of earth proto-plasms, but there was no miracle, I assure you, in the rapid growth of that vine."

"Can you give me another illustration of the truth of your theory? For instance, can you bring together the elements of a nail, here upon my table, in our presence?"

"I will try, although I should be very sorry to see you attach too much importance to these natural phenomena. On the other hand, I know that the witnessing of a cer-

tain number of them is indispensable to beget the necessary faith for serious investigation."

"Just so."

"You will permit me to place this sheet of blank paper upon the table. I will try to bring together, upon its white surface, the elements needed for the fashioning of a nail; you may look at the paper, only do so in a mild or wistful manner, without staring; for you might create counter vibrations and impede or prevent success. Now observe."

The Hindoo began seemingly with a deep concentration of mind: at first his breathing became heavy, with deep inspirations; soon, his eyes assumed a vacant look and he appeared to be in a trance. The Bishop, meanwhile, tried to be as mentally passive as was possible, and simply to play the part of an observer. After some thirty minutes of close attention he saw spots of dark vapor hovering above and close to the paper; these were soon surrounded by other vapors of a dense white; then began to form a little yellowish cloud, followed by a few others of different colors. They all commenced to revolve and intermingle. Soon, a nucleus of a dark color could be distinguished which gradually became more defined, and at length assumed a definite shape. The clouds or vapors seemed by degrees to condense into a solid. After ten minutes they vanished, and there, before the astonished eyes of the Bishop, lay a new and perfect nail.

The Brahman recovered from his trance with a few deep inspirations, and seeing the nail on the paper, glanced at the Bishop with a sad but pleasant smile.

Again at this juncture was heard the tinkling of the astral bells. The visitor arose, and in a low voice said:

"To conclude then, put your pastoral affairs into the hands of your coadjutor for a month. One week from

to-day, at sunrise, mount your saddle-horse, turn toward the mountains to the west, and thus you will be guided until your destination is reached. Have faith ! ”

After the departure of his visitor, the Bishop again lapsed into deep meditation. He had heard, certainly, that there existed, somewhere in the deep recesses of the Himalaya mountains, Buddhist monasteries, where men were prepared by various modes of asceticism, for the priesthood. He had been informed that some of them could work the most extraordinary miracles: still the storm; walk on the waters; heal the sick; speak in many languages; travel in their astral bodies to any distance, and give other evidence of occult powers.

He remembered very well, reading in the life of Saint Francis Xavier, how this holy man, when a missionary in India, had there acquired all the occult powers which the Buddhist high priests are reputed to possess, and that he used them for the benefit of his religion and his God. In many bungalows he had seen the portrait of that saint, whom even the natives held in great veneration and called Xavier Jack.

The Bishop's manifold duties as missionary in India, as well as the scientific studies which he had zealously pursued, had hitherto prevented him from giving the Buddhist miracles more serious consideration. But now the matter was being brought home to him in such a manner that he could no longer ignore the mysterious power evidently wielded by Brahman and Buddhist.

He made up his mind at once, and rising from his chair, said in a decided tone, “I will go.” Soon afterward he retired to his chamber.

The week following Bishop Angelo devoted to ecclesiastical affairs, preparing a list of orders to be attended to by his coadjutor during his absence, and this finished, he said to his associate: “To-morrow morning I shall

leave you, perhaps for a month. I do not know whether I can communicate with you or not. If I can, I will ; but if you hear not from me, do not be anxious, for I shall appear in due time. Attend faithfully to all matters belonging to the diocese ; open all letters, and keep those of a personal nature until my return."

" I shall obey your orders to the best of my knowledge and ability."

" I know you will ; and now, may God bless you ! "

CHAPTER II.

THE next morning the Bishop mounted his horse, again blessed his coadjutor, who knelt before him, and set forth toward the Himalaya mountains. He had not journeyed long before his thoughts turned on the Indian thaumaturgist. A multitude of questions suggested themselves. It was clear to his mind that the conjurer was by no means a simple street fakir, performing to gather a few pennies. He was evidently one of the wise men of the East, one who had become master of the occult sciences, perhaps through a life-time of discipline, purity, and beneficence.

Bishop Angelo travelled the whole day long without feeling incommoded by heat or dust. He appeared to be guided by some unseen influence, for whenever he came to cross-roads and was in doubt which one to take, a Hindoo stepped forth mysteriously, and with many salutations directed his way.

After having thus journeyed until nightfall, eating of his scant provisions and drinking from the springs along the road, the noble traveller was weary, as was his horse.

The sun was about to set, when rousing himself to observation, he was pleased to see at a turn in the road, a small bungalow, with a vine-covered verandah. As he drew nearer, a Hindoo approached with solemn step, and saluting respectfully, took the horse by the bridle, at the same time motioning the Bishop to dismount and accept the hospitality of his humble dwelling. He complied, and entering the modest habitation, took his seat on a bamboo chair. At once he became conscious

that some subtle influence permeated his entire frame and relieved it of all its weariness; while the conviction stole upon him that he had entered the abode of a noble and spiritualized being.

A little wooden table, the usual family altar with its religious images and vases for incense, and a few simple kitchen utensils, constituted the furniture of the bungalow.

The horse having been well cared for, the Hindoo made his appearance. Again with a respectful salutation, he invited his guest to follow him, and pointing to a little water-fall where he could make his ablutions, returned to his dwelling.

The Bishop, after bathing in oriental fashion, returned to the house entirely refreshed and in good spirits.

Meanwhile, the Hindoo had placed on the table, rice, vegetables, honey, unleavened bread, and a pitcher of milk, and invited his guest to partake.

There was something so kind, affectionate, and respectful in the manner and bearing of the Hindoo, that the Prelate was filled with gratitude. After the repast his thoughts reverted to the Court of France, to Dolora, to the Pope who had so kindly received him, cared for and advanced him in his ecclesiastical career. Looking around, he seemed for the first time to realize that he was alone in a wild and isolated spur of a remote and unfrequented mountain range. He reflected with growing uneasiness: "If his Holiness the Pope saw me here on such an errand, what would he think of me?" At that moment his host appeared, and placing in his hand something that resembled a rosary, said in a low, soft and melodious voice, for the first time addressing his Reverence:

"Let my brother pray to the Infinite Father to show

him the truth, to let the divine light shine on his weary and clouded path, and light will be given him !”

The Bishop with his host, both kneeling, prayed silently and fervently. After a few minutes, he arose, and thinking of the experience of Xavier, exclaimed :

“Henceforth I will have faith.”

The Hindoo motioned him to a cot, made of betel-wood, on which were some blankets, for the nights were cold in these mountain regions. Angelo retired for the night, and now calm and full of hope, slept soundly until dawn.

After breakfast he took an affectionate farewell of his host, and then mounted his horse, which he found already saddled and bridled and in excellent condition for the journey. The Hindoo pointing with his finger, said :

“Up this cañon, for two days, to the head of the stream ; thence westward across the ridge, enter the ravine running southwest to the village with the sacred temple.”

Making low obeisance to his guest he exclaimed :

“May our Lord Buddha accompany thee !” And still with eyes fixed on the noble cavalier, until he disappeared from sight, might be heard his grave and musical voice :

“Great, good, and wise man, may the Everlasting Spirit grant thee abundant light and many days.”

Bishop Angelo, although in no mood for observation, could not fail to notice that he had no longer before him the common scenery of India. The gorgeous tropical vegetation of the country had disappeared, and it seemed as if he were in the mountains of Europe, covered with fir, pine, and cedar. Soon he relapsed into meditation. Analyzing his feelings, he perceived that his rencontre with the Hindoo had exercised no

slight influence upon him, and that it helped to tranquilize his mind, and give him new faith in the result of his adventurous journey.

"There was a certain atmosphere, an influence in that humble bungalow," he said to himself, "that made one happy and contented. At the same time it seemed to clear the brain from earthly care, and uplift the spirit into a super-mundane realm of thought and enjoyment."

The pure air of the Himalayas and the murmur of the mountain streams may have contributed in some degree to the Bishop's placidity; but what chiefly gave him hope and courage, was that his host and those who had before directed his course seemed as if they expected his coming.

As he continued his journey, he almost imagined that he was in the heart of the French Pyrenées. "These Himalayas," he inwardly remarked, "have nearly the same tree species and arbusta, the same balmy and delightful atmosphere."

The mountain spurs were no longer deserted; here and there were small villages with their miniature temples.

Toward noon of the second day, when approaching a bungalow on the mountain side, the owner stepped forth across his pathway, and with profound salutations invited him to enter and rest. He willingly complied, and when rested and ready to resume his journey, his host said:

"I will go with you to the next village, where a rare semi-religious ceremony, seldom witnessed by strangers, is about to be performed."

The native walked beside him, their path leading up a ravine. Arrived at the top of an adjacent ridge a group of people appeared, not far away in the valley

below. On the hillside was a little village, and near by a temple, almost hidden in a cluster of trees, whence issued a confused murmur of sound, above which could be distinguished the clashing of cymbals, the beating of drums, and the noise of other sonorous instruments. Slowly approaching the village, the music became more distinct, and soon it appeared that dancing was in progress. As our travellers drew near, the master of ceremonies came forth to meet them. He was an aged man with white hair and beard, and, as it seemed, a priest. He invited them to a seat in the front rank among the spectators, and while bowing politely to the Bishop, made profound salutations to the guide, as if he were a man of mark. "I wonder," thought the Prelate, "if my humble host of the still more humble bungalow is another of those wise men of the East. They look very simple, very ordinary people indeed, and yet perhaps they are the custodians of much of the precious lore of the Orient. Singular country, and more singular people."

He looked at his companion again, but failed to discover anything extraordinary in him, except perhaps a very intelligent and piercing eye, and a countenance beaming with kindness and benevolence.

The Bishop, being seated, could now observe what was going on. There were about one hundred men and women sitting in a circle. In the centre was a heap of large stones, upon which a fire was burning.

"That fire," said the guide, "is one of the sacred fires of the Himalayas, and consecrated to this tribe which belongs to the noble race of the Sacerdotal Brahman. A few years ago, a wandering Brahman discovered a spring of asphaltum or some similar substance in this valley. He found that it oozed out of a black oil-bearing rock at certain seasons of the year, according

to the position of the moon and certain of the planets. This disposed him to believe that it might be similar to the paranaphthaline found in the Mahadeo Hills in the province of Gongwana in the Deccan. With this paranaphthaline, are covered the backs of those concave panes of glass that constitute the far renowned Bhattah mirrors, so famous for their magical properties."

"I have often heard of those magical mirrors," said the Bishop, "but I have never had the least belief in the powers ascribed to them."

"Whatever their properties," said his companion, with a faint but significant smile, "the discoverer of the spring went on journeying to obtain some of the sacred fire of the Garoonahs, which has been burning since the earliest records of India. He succeeded with much difficulty, in obtaining and preserving through his long journey a particle of this sacred fire, and with it was lit a pile of prepared wood on the very stones where the fire is now burning. This then is a branch, an undoubted branch of the sacred fire of the Garoonahs, absolutely indispensable to the imparting of magical powers to the asphaltum, through the boiling or purification process."

"So you also, my kind host, believe in magical mirrors? I now feel curious to see one myself; but I anticipate the result. I should see nothing but a black surface, and be told——'You are not a sensitive; your nature is not yet spiritualized enough to see, etc.'" This with a faintly sarcastic curl of the lip.

"Perhaps an opportunity will be given you to test the power of the mirrors. If they reveal nothing to you, you will at least have the satisfaction of saying that you tested them, and that as far as your experience goes, they are worthless."

At this moment the noise was so deafening that fur-

ther conversation was impossible. The tam-tams were being struck vigorously, and the cymbals, flutes, and other instruments were made to give forth all the din of which they were capable.

And now the master of ceremonies selected from the throng a girl and a boy, about eight years of age, and giving each of them a new earthen vase, told them to walk to a rock which he designated. The children marched in front, the Brahman, musicians, and all the assemblage following with measured step. At the foot of the rock lay a flat stone of triangular shape, which the priest, chanting a prayer, lifted with great solemnity. So doing, he uncovered a hole in the ground, about a foot in diameter. The music was still playing, and a few voices could be heard uttering strange sounds. The children placed their vases near the hole, and with an earthen ladle, curiously fashioned, poured into them some black oily matter, with which they filled their vessels, and at the same time emptied the cavity. This was the asphaltum, discovered by the wandering Brahman. The priest then carefully replaced the triangular stone, amid renewed prayers and ceremonies. The procession returned to the spot where the sacred fire was burning; the people formed in a circle, and the vases were deposited by the children on the heap of stones near the fire. Then the Brahman took a new earthen pot or kettle, suspended it over the flames from a tripod, and beckoned to a young couple among the throng.

"These two young people are fine specimens of your race," said the Bishop, looking admiringly on their well-proportioned figures.

"Yes," answered his companion, "they are to be married to-night, after this ceremony. They are both quite pure and guileless; for in these isolated mountains, living under the very eaves of the holy temples of our

Lord Buddha, our young people remain in every sense undefiled. The pair now before us have been selected to give the paranaphthaline some properties necessary for the magic mirror."

At this moment, the music changed to a slow and solemn measure. The young couple took the vases, and poured half their contents into the earthen pot suspended on the tripod, which was now kept in motion over the fire. Smoke soon began to evolve. The music had struck into a more lively strain, and the youth and maiden commenced to move in what could, as yet, hardly be called a dance. Their motion was rather a kind of gymnastic exercise, bringing every muscle of the body into play. Soon the music grew inspiring; the spectators became excited, and the young pair always carrying the vases on their heads or shoulders, followed the promptings of the audience.

The opening of the dance can hardly be described. Every kind of motion was gone through, every possible pose, graceful in the extreme, at times of languor, at times of passion, of love's yearnings. Still amid all their evolutions they never forgot to stir at intervals the boiling asphaltum, nor to pour into the kettle some of the contents of the vases. The music had now become passionate in its character, and had in it something of the seductive; its language, its purpose being to arouse the dancers to the highest pitch of excitement, that their bodies might evolve the greatest amount of jiva or vital force. There was, however, no trace of vulgarity or indecency in the display, though we must admit that no appeal was made to the higher faculties of this Hindoo gathering amid the remote fastnesses of Himalay.

The Bishop felt a mysterious influence which he could not define. As if aware of his thoughts, his guide thus addressed him :

"All this seems very strange to you, does it not?"

"I confess it does."

"Nevertheless there is a deep meaning in the ceremony, which involves a scientific principle of great importance."

"I do not understand."

"This asphaltum, the result of an underground decomposition of substances, comes to the surface of the earth, in a virgin state. It is very sensitive to all 'auras' or magnetic emanations from the human body, absorbing them readily. Gathered fresh by the virgin hands of two young children possessing as yet but neutral auras, it is not influenced by them in the least. The fire eliminates from the boiling liquid the last earthly qualities which it may have retained. The object of the dances and gyrations of the two young people, the only ones coming in contact with the virgin asphaltum, is to evolve from their bodies all the vital forces, all the human magnetism, all the nervous fluid possible, so as to saturate the asphaltum, and thus humanize it so to say. This nervous force emanating from them, while their minds are filled with pleasurable emotions toward each other, as is natural on the eve of marriage, impregnates the asphaltum, giving it the property of being sensitive to events concerning true and sincere love; also of matters interesting earth life, the main uses to which magic mirrors are generally put. If impure magnetisms were brought in contact with the virgin asphaltum, its revelations would be controlled by them, and would be unreliable or even detrimental."

The Bishop looked at his companion in great astonishment.

"My dear guide," he said, "you are the expounder of a theory of imponderables which I have never heard

before ; it would hardly be admitted in France by the Royal Academy of Sciences."

"I know that learned body to be very materialistic in all its conclusions. It invariably rejects everything it does not understand."

"Not reject, but postpones until it does understand and can explain. That is the only safe rule for a scientific body ; is it not ?"

"Be that as it may, it is nevertheless true, that it loses much valuable information by refusing to investigate matters which it does not understand, as for instance the occult forces ; it forgets that these forces are occult only as far as not understood ; they are occult to the ignorant ; but to others they are not so."

This Bishop again glanced with astonishment at his companion.

"The use of the photographic camera (quite simple to the novitiate) is high magic to the unlearned Hindoo, and similarly, the ceremonies now before us are but a process for the chemical preparation of a sensitive plate, destined to photograph actual events in the world. The nitrate of silver of the photographic plate remains sensitive by being kept from the influence of light. Just so with the paranaphthaline ; it is isolated between two non-conductors ; glass on one side, and a coat of a certain varnish or gum on the other ; two substances repelling magnetism or auras of any kind. Thus these mirrors only reflect and are not themselves affected. Is this not reasonable, and do you not see the scientific possibilities of my argument ?"

" 'Scientific possibilities' I admit readily," said the Bishop with a smile. "Your illustration of the photographic camera is very clever, but your analogy fails, I think, in a most important point ; for in photography the object photographed is present and in full view,

while the pictures on your camera come from afar, from distances altogether too remote to affect your glass."

"But you seem," responded the Brahman, "to leave wholly out of your estimate the subtle and far-reaching effects of concentrated thought and will-power. This is the potent factor that invalidates your conclusion, and restores to our mirrors more than the balance of power as compared with your camera. When you look in the former with the desire to learn, for instance, the spot where any person may be, the first requisite is that you bend your thought intently on that person, thereby directing upon him a ray of astral light, and the mirror, catching this ray, shows on its surface a picture of the surroundings of the person thought of, and soon thereafter a likeness of the person."

At this point the conversation was interrupted by the officiating Brahman, who approaching the Bishop, and presenting him with a piece of glass of concave oval form, said :

"Follow me."

He led him to the fire, above which still hung the vessel, and by means of a spatula covered the back of the glass with the preparation.

"Hold it over the fire, until dry," said the Brahman, "then retire to yonder clump of trees, concentrate your thoughts on some far-off friend, and look."

The Bishop obeyed, and when the asphaltum was sufficiently dry and hard, seated himself under the group of trees, placed the mirror on his knee, and in a moment was lost in meditation.

"Here I am," was his first thought, "a Roman Catholic Bishop, in the midst of a crowd of pagans, with a magic mirror in my hand, ready to consult it, and thus sanction an act which the Church condemns."

His heart fluttered a little, but the scientist prevailed

over the theologian, and he resolved to look into the glass.

"To whom shall I direct my thoughts?" he asked himself.

Instantly his cheeks reddened, and he whispered to himself, "No! no! that must not be, that would desecrate her memory!"

Nevertheless, after a moment's pause, he placed his hand in a secret pocket, and looking cautiously around, opened a golden diamond-mounted locket.

One could see that the Prelate was laboring under strong emotion. Gazing affectionately at the locket, he exclaimed:

"Dolora, I would give the world to know whether you are happy!"

Almost involuntarily his hand sought the mirror.

"No! no! I must not!" but after a few minutes of suspense, "Dolora, forgive me," he exclaimed, "if by any means, lawful or unlawful, I seek to know of your welfare."

Then he took up the mirror, gazing at its surface steadily. Meanwhile the Hindoo was watching him from a distance.

After a few moments there appeared in the glass, what seemed to be folds of drapery, resembling two heavy curtains, closing in the centre. Soon they parted, bringing to view a golden back-ground, with stars continually appearing and disappearing. Then came a landscape view—a large building with a huge dome, and two large aisles, in the centre of a spacious lawn with fountain and flower beds, giving the impression of a royal palace. In an instant, a part of the façade of the right aisle vanished, disclosing the interior of a large room, where three men and three handsome but depraved

women were seated at a table laden with rich viands and choicest wines. Wine was flowing freely, and laughter, songs and bursts of gaiety filled the banquet hall. It was a scene of debauch, and the Bishop, sick at heart, was about to turn away, when he seemed to hear the voice of one of the women :

“Your Majesty is the jolliest king of the continent !”
The speaker then rose, half intoxicated, holding a glass of wine in her hand :

“Let us all drink the health of the jolly King—*Vive le Roi !*”

At this moment, in the left aisle of the palace, another chamber opened to view. Here a lady was kneeling on a *prie-Dieu*. Her hands, convulsively clasped, were raised toward a rare painting of the “*Ecce Homo*.” Tears streamed down her eyes, and sobs appeared to check her utterances.

“Oh ! my Savior,” she ejaculated, in deep agony ;
“give me strength to bear my heavy burden.”

“Oh ! Dolora !” cried the Bishop.

At this moment, the figure of a woman became slowly visible, seeming to emerge as from a dark-looming cloud. She was of foreign aspect and attire, dark in complexion, with coal-black hair and eyes, the latter lit with a strange but vivid light. She must have been very beautiful. Looking at the kneeling lady with intense hatred, and slowly pointing at her, she said in harsh tones :

“Thou hast married the man I loved, the father of my child ; thou art the cause of my hopeless exile. Queen, thou shalt die.”

As she spoke a stream of darkness flowed from her eyes and outstretched hands, completely enveloping Queen Dolora. The latter, putting one hand upon her heart, with the other touched a bell, and then sank

swooning into the arms of a lady, who came just in time to receive her, and whom the Bishop recognized as the Duchess de Buonaceli. At that instant the dark woman vanished, and with her the vision on the mirror. And now to the Bishop's gaze nothing was visible but the asphalt coating of the glass.

The Hindoo guide had closely observed him while looking in the mirror, and reading his emotions, knew that they were not of a nature to permit inquiry. Withdrawing quietly, he spoke a few words to the High Priest, who, a moment later, approached the Bishop, now pale as death, and presented him with a box of red cedar.

"Put the mirror in this box," he said, "and allow none to touch it, so that it may preserve the magnetic aura of the one who first used it. Though its receptacle, the cedar box, may be handled by others, yet better it were not so. Keep both as a token of thy visit. Use it sparingly, and only when thy soul is in need of light, or when some one is in danger. May it guide and protect thee, and may our Lord Buddha overshadow thee forever."

After a profound salutation, the High Priest returned to the sacred fire where he was preparing mirrors for his people. The Hindoo guide, meanwhile, led forth the Bishop's horse and said as he helped him to mount:

"Ascend straight up this cañon until sundown," adding as he bade adieu with an affectionate salutation:

"May the Masters anoint thee; and the Infinite Father smile upon thee!"

Vain to analyze the tumult of feelings that tore the Prelate's heart.

"Dolora! Dolora!" he cried, and spurring his faith-

ful companion, who did not understand such extraordinary treatment, he sped on his way.

The sun was setting, and the dusky hues of night were slowly creeping over the mountains. Soon he had arrived at a point where he could no longer see his way, for the road seemed to end in a pile of huge boulders. On the left was an almost perpendicular wall of rock descending into a deep ravine, and on the right was the base of an immense and inaccessible mountain.

"It is growing dark ; what shall I do ?" he asked of himself.

At this moment a strange jarring noise was heard, and just before him, a little to the right, he saw to his astonishment, one of the boulders that obstructed his path turn as upon a hinge, and uncover in the wall of rock an opening through which appeared a glimmer of light. Though sorely puzzled, he entered the mysterious cavity without misgivings, and the stony portal closed after him. Proceeding toward the light, he was presently met by a Hindoo or Brahman, who, with low obeisance, bade him enter. He found himself in a large chamber of speckled, blue granite. The music of a rippling brook was heard, and the Brahman, answering the mental question of his visitor, lit a couple of torches of resinous wood, and beckoned him to follow, lighting the way before him. After advancing some fifty yards, during which the noise of the running waters grew more distinct, his host suddenly turned to the left, and disclosed a scene so enchanting that the Bishop could not refrain from an expression of delight. A stream of water, fifteen feet wide, was flowing with crystal clearness over a bed of white stones, and above it hung thousands of stalactites of every size and hue, some so large that they had formed one with the stalagmites which

met them from below. The reflection of the torches upon this white mass of nature's architecture, throwing a vivid light upon the stalactites and leaving in deep shadow the space between them, added to the silvery reflection of the rivulet, made a picture at once weird and beautiful. The guide planted the torches in the hollow of some broken limestone, and with a wave of the hand showing the running waters to his visitor, retired toward the granite chamber.

The Bishop seated himself to survey the scene more fully, for he could not easily satisfy his gaze. He looked and admired.

"This is in truth an enchanted country," he said to himself; "huge rocks serving as doors, turning upon invisible hinges, and moved by invisible hands! Caves of transcendent beauty! Well, my journey shows new wonders at every step."

He made his ablution in the ice-cold waters of the stream, after which he returned to the granite chamber, where he slowly sank into deep meditation, the vision of the mirror still occupying his mind.

Was Dolora really so intensely miserable? Was the King, whom she had wedded, the same debauchee after as before his marriage? Was the vision of the mirror true? The castle, which he had often seen during his travels, was unmistakably the same, with its lofty dome, its spacious aisles, and broad porches, supported by Corinthian columns. The landscapes surrounding the monarch's palace were faithfully pictured. Then why should the other part of the vision be false?

The Bishop was much exercised as to the fate of Dolora. Since he had devoted himself to the service of religion he had striven nobly to forget her. Whenever chance brought her image to his mind, he repelled it

immediately, for he well knew that to dwell upon it only tended to defeat his religious aspirations and draw down his soul to earth. Even the locket containing her picture, given to him by the Duchess de Buonaceli, and worn upon his heart, he had never ventured to open. The first time he had done so, was before looking into the magic mirror, and then only from the necessity of the case. If the vision had shown Dolora contented and happy, perhaps the locket might have closed forever upon the extinction of the long-smouldering fires, but as it was, the evidences of her acute suffering rekindling them had, through sympathy, re-opened his slowly healing wounds. But what meant the dark woman of the vision, scowling upon Dolora ?

At this moment a vivid light seemed to pass before his eyes. Looking up, he saw a large scroll stretched before him, and in letters of a subdued light he could read :

“Under all circumstances keep an even mind ; be a spectator and not an actor. The laws of Karma must be satisfied ; suffering is a purifying fire that leads up to the Infinite Father ! Do not let suffering depress or happiness elate you ; who would be the master of others, must first master himself !”

Turning toward his host, he observed that he was seated motionless, and as if in deep abstraction. Presently, the latter moved his head, and drew a deep breath, as if aroused from a trance.

“Did my kind host see the inscription on the wall,” asked the Bishop with much emotion.

“I did,” answered the Brahman ; “it is a warning from our revered Masters of the monastery. They wish us to guard carefully our emotions, for they disturb greatly the nervous aura around us by subjecting it to

violent vibrations, and consequently agitate our psychic body. It is through this psychic body that we may come in contact with the super-sensuous world, with the soul-realm. This leads us finally to an intimate communion with the world of causes, with God or Parabrahm. This psychic body can be developed only in the very stillness of the soul. Thus the Masters spoke in the scroll on the wall. But you are fatigued, your journey has been long and eventful. A couch awaits you in the next room. May a sweet sleep refresh you. Good-night."

Notwithstanding his weariness and longing for repose, the Bishop could not sleep. He would half unconsciously review the events of the day just passed, and in fact of his whole journey. Thoughts leaning toward the knowledge of the hidden forces of nature, of whose existence fresh proofs seemed ever to occur, dominated his mind. Perhaps these earnest aspirations for occult knowledge and all the powers it implies were, in his soul's depths, connected with Dolora's destiny, and he was longing to wield them for her relief. His meditations, however, soon took a broader range. He realized how much his mental condition had gradually changed, as he travelled higher and higher up the mountains. Thoughts of a more elevated nature, he observed, would flow through his brain. As the air grew more rarefied, his mental faculties seemed to grow clearer. To know positively and demonstratively the truth, not only of man's destiny, but that of the worlds above him, was the desire that consumed him. He felt, however, more happy and hopeful than ever before. At last, with a feeling of supreme trust in God, and an ardent aspiration for the knowledge of divine truth, he gradually sank into a deep sleep.

At the first glimmer of dawn he awoke, much strengthened. Already the breakfast-table was set, and after eating, he mounted his steed to continue his journey. The Brahman conducted him outside the cave to a meadow through which flowed the crystal stream of the grotto, and, instructing him to follow a narrow pathway that wound along its banks, bade him God-speed.

CHAPTER III.

THE Bishop felt that the end of his pilgrimage was near. There was something in the air, or perhaps in the brain of the noble traveller which told him that somewhere, not far distant, converse was being held relating to his journey. It seemed to him that his arrival was expected, and that he would be a welcome guest. Notwithstanding all these good omens, he was a little nervous; his pulse beat faster; and indeed hearts as stout as his had quailed in traversing that perilous road.

It was high twelve, as the occultists would say. The sun was darting its rays upon the traveller. The air at this altitude was much rarefied, and both rider and horse were exhausted. The Bishop halted a moment, and wiping his brow, took a survey of his surroundings. A few hundred yards ahead, a perpendicular wall of basalt of great height, full of overhanging, dangerous looking rocks, seemed to bar further progress in that direction. Two inaccessible mountains, one on each side of the cañon, fronted the high cliffs terminating his pathway.

"Well," said the Bishop, "this seems strange. Have I undertaken this wearisome and perilous journey, to land finally in a *cul-de-sac*?"

The distance between the place where he had halted and the perpendicular cliff was covered with a growth of superb cedars, and all round grew succulent herbage. A small, sparkling stream meandered through the trees. He alighted, took the saddle from his horse, and turned him loose. He then cooled his hands and face in the

running stream, and sat down to rest and decide upon his course. After the lapse of half an hour he rose, to reconnoitre, when lo ! he saw standing before him a tall Brahman of imposing mien, and of a cast so intellectual and benevolent that the Bishop instinctively bowed before him. The Brahman returned the salutation with a gentle smile that won the traveller's heart.

"My brother had faith, and has come. It is well. Let him follow me," he said.

The voice was so sweet, the tone so full and clear and so much in harmony with the bearing of the Brahman, that the Bishop knew he was in the presence of a superior being. He followed his companion, who led him to a beautiful nook, shaded by large trees, in the midst of which a handsome little bungalow was cosily hidden. The building rested against the perpendicular basalt wall that had impeded the Bishop's progress. The verandahs were covered with creeping vines, bearing the most exquisite flowers, and trained in most artistic fashion. This at least seemed not to be the dwelling of an ascetic, but of an intense lover of nature's beauties.

The Brahman preceded the visitor into the room, where he found the table covered with a white cloth and a plentiful lunch. Both sat down, and were waited upon by a young man of sallow complexion, wearing a coarse brown frock.

"This is Amriti, one of my Chelas or pupils," said the Brahman. "He is kind enough to do the housework in return for his tuition."

The Chela made a respectful salutation to the guest.

"Amriti," continued the Brahman as he sipped his tea, "is in the period of silence and is not allowed to talk. Profound meditation upon philosophical subjects I explain to him, is his task at present."

"This imposed silence seems strange to me, if you permit the expression of my honest opinion, my dear host. I think that conversation upon the philosophical questions which you have under consideration, would be of greater value to the pupil than absolute silence ; do you not think so?"

"No ; meditation reaches truth sooner, by developing our inner, higher self. Speaking always carries with it an expenditure of 'aura' or nervous force.

"If you were not so tired, I would ask of you to permit me to explain the theory of auras, which cannot fail to interest you. Moreover, the Masters desire that any candidate for initiation should well understand the workings of the auric* force before entering the walls of the monastery. Such understanding lessens the explanations preparatory to the conferring of the degrees."

"I will be only too glad, my worthy host, to listen to your teachings, and very thankful for any information you will be kind enough to impart," replied the Bishop. "I am perfectly refreshed and eager to listen to your instruction."

"Very well: I will say then that this aura is like the halo of light with which the mediæval painters invested the heads of divine personages, and is in fact an atmosphere existing not only around the head, but the entire body and extending to a greater or less distance. This distance is called the 'zone of radiation' which increases daily through each deep meditation about divine things, through every earnest aspiration toward Parabrahm, through the performance of good deeds, through benevolence, and the leading of a pure life, which is of itself a continuous prayer. In some Chelas this zone extends from a radius of fifty feet to two miles.

*The author uses the word auric in the sense of pertaining to the "aura."

The auras of the Masters, radiate across oceans and continents."

The Bishop listened with increasing interest to the theory expounded by the learned Brahman. The latter continued :

"This aura, like everything else in nature, has dual functions, it is both positive and negative, it gives and it receives. It influences always persons coming within its radiating zone, but more or less consciously according to the sensitiveness of the individuals so influenced. Take for example, two persons, one moral, intellectual and religious; the other gross, sensual, and living altogether on the material plane. If their auras come in contact they will be mutually affected. The former will feel a depressing influence, and will shrink from the presence of the other, while the latter will receive an impression for good from the aura of the moral man, and be naturally attracted toward him. Thus the two auras, intermingling with one another, will have an impress for good or for evil upon the brain of both, the permanency of which is in the direct ratio of the sensitiveness or positivity of the character of the person so influenced."

"All this is possible?" said the Bishop, who was now thoroughly interested.

"Yes," continued the Brahman, "if the individuality of the moral person coming in contact with the aura of the sensualist, is but little developed; if he has been reared on a diet of negative morality and negative virtue, without any self-reliance or personal will; and if, on the other side, the sensualist is utterly depraved, his aura may make upon the negative aura of the other an impression strong enough to work, like a cancer, its way to the brain, and graft upon it its own immoral bent and criminal idiosyncrasy!"

The Brahman had grown warm in the elucidation of this metaphysical subject, and had thoroughly aroused the interest of his listener. The latter, however, having some doubts, asked for further explanation.

"Master, I do not understand what you mean by negative morality or negative virtue. How can there be any negative side to these two positive soul attributes?"

"Negative morality and virtue," continued the Brahmanr "is that virtue or morality which centers in self. People who profess morality and lead virtuous lives only because their respective creeds say that unless they do so, they must go, either to the Hell of the Christians or to the Kama-loca of the Buddhist; persons who are moral and virtuous only through fear for their personal safety and welfare, are the possessors of negative qualities of soul, and are always liable to be seriously affected by the sensual aura of any depraved individual with whom they may come in contact. On the other hand, the positive virtues are those based on personal conviction, love, and admiration of all things good, true, pure and elevated; in short, a yearning to understand the laws and attributes of the Supreme Creator. Morality thus begotten, is positive, for it is the child of the intellect. Virtue thus professed, is positive. It matters not with what deleterious aura the intellectually moral are thrown in contact; the chilling impress will be fleeting, lasting just long enough to warn against the approach of a hurtful foe. The aura of the positively virtuous will, however, often impress in so forcible a manner the aura of the sensualist, as to leave a lasting effect, and often be the means of a healthy and moral reformation. You fully realize at present, I suppose, how important it is, for a good and noble man to extend

the radius of his aura as far as possible, for it is his own field for good action."

"Certainly," answered the Bishop; "I understand this very well, but what I do not understand so readily, is how, here in the vast recesses of the Himalayas, you seem to be aware, not only of the existence of this magnetic aura, but also of its properties. It is only of late that the existence of this aura has been ascertained by a German scientist, the Baron Von Reichenbach. It might perhaps interest you to know how he reached this discovery."

"I should be much pleased to learn it, although the Masters, from time immemorial, have made use of this very aura for their occult purposes."

"Well, this Baron Von Reichenbach was a keen observer. Seeing a large magnet attract nails, and lift several pounds of iron, he concluded this to be the result of an unknown force. 'I wonder,' he said to himself, 'if that force can be seen.' Acting upon this idea, he built a perfectly dark cellar. Into this the Baron threw at random his powerful magnet. He invited ladies, whose nervous temperament, he judged, made them sensitive, to enter the cellar and try to find the magnet. His experiment was wonderfully successful. The first lady, after having remained in the cellar for half an hour, pointed out the magnet to the Baron, who did not know himself where he had thrown it. She took him by the hand, and led him up to the magnet where both found it. She said that she discovered it by seeing light, yellow and blue flames, having the form of a horseshoe. This delighted the Baron, and he repeated the experiment, until he had it confirmed by sixty sensitives. For these investigations he used rock crystals, chemicals, salt crystals, and other substances, around which the sensitives saw flames of

various colors. They discovered also a warm and a cold point in the crystals, and small flames around the belt and sides. The first showed the axis of polarization and the north and south or positive and negative poles ; the second, the dia-magnetism of Faraday ; and the third one a part of the aura of the crystal. The Baron showed also that growing plants gave forth continually small flames of different hues, such constituting their aura. Turning his investigations toward man, he ascertained that in human-kind was a well defined aura, an axis of polarization, a positive and negative side, and many other interesting facts. He called these flames or this aura, a force, for in the magnet it attracted iron. He gave it the name of 'odic or odylic force !' So much for Baron Von Reichenbach, the real European pioneer in these psychic researches. The publications of this remarkable man have had a very great, though unacknowledged influence in Europe. They have started many intelligent people on a new line of thought. Experiments have been conducted in secret, and very astonishing and confirmatory results obtained."

"I am really glad to learn that materialistic science has at last found one man, who has condescended to investigate the psychical forces."

"Moreover, I know of a society of young and intelligent medical students, all assistants in a noted hospital for the insane in France, who devote their spare time to very interesting experiments with these psychic forces."

"Indeed, and how do they proceed ?"

"They take for subjects, hysterical patients. Hysteria seems to be a disease which imposes on the nervous system the highest degree of sensitiveness, or hyperesthesia as the doctors call it."

“And in this condition they experiment with them?”

“No. They magnetize them first, or in other words, they put them into an hypnotic condition. Hypnotism is a new word used by these students among themselves, and which has not yet reached the public generally. This condition is very easily produced in hysteric persons, and they are then sensitive to the least auras of substances that surround them. No actual contact is necessary. Experiments with these patients prove that opium, for instance, put under the pillow of the bed upon which they are lying, causes them to sleep soundly in a short time. Similarly, an emetic produces vomiting. Metals have each their special action, and so have drugs. This influence, acting at a distance, has been ascertained beyond a doubt. It is also proven, that the nearer to the patient the medicine is placed, the more strongly he is affected by it; that he becomes less sensitive to its effects as it is further away, and finally, that the influence of the drug ceases to be felt at all. The students have thus established that there is for each body a zone of radiation outside of which its influence ceases to be felt. In one word, the aura of the body of the subject must come in contact with the aura of the agent, that the former may be influenced by it. So you see, noble Master,” added the Bishop, with a kind of satisfaction, “that I am not unprepared to understand the theory of the aura which you have so ably and so kindly explained to me.”

“The Masters know our brother to be duly prepared; hence the invitation extended to him to pay them a visit in their secret retreat in the Himalayas.”

At this moment were heard the beautiful chimes of the astral bells. The Brahman listened intently and then said :

"The Masters await our brother; let us go to them."

For an instant the Bishop hesitated, and his heart throbbed: but the next moment his will-power asserted itself.

The Brahman bade him follow. He led him to a room in the rear of the house, which, as we know, was built against the huge basaltic mountains that had blocked the Prelate's journey. Entering a closet, he pressed a secret lever, and immediately a panel of the wall moved and uncovered the opening of a dark tunnel leading into the mountain.

"Follow," said the Brahman.

Amriti led the way, carrying a torch of resinous wood.

"These hiding-places are necessary," said the Master. "Tourists are scouring the unexplored recesses of the Himalayas. We do not wish them to discover our retreat, and we will always prevent them from doing so by use of special psychological influences."

The tunnel led into a large cave, following the windings of a stream that flowed through it. Bishop Angelo could not help remarking, how weird and strange were the incidents of his journey. Now the dark waters of the subterranean river reflected the torchlight; while at times the sound of his steps echoed as from limitless space; and total darkness everywhere. A flaming torch illuminated the patriarchal face, the long white beard and spotless robe of the Brahman, and the Bishop with his noble features, his aristocratic mien and civic dress of clerical cut would have attracted, we think, the artistic eye and pencil of a Doré.

After about half an hour of somewhat difficult travel, the party saw a glimmer of light, and soon emerged into one of the most lovely valleys on which human eye has rested—gigantic trees, creeping vines of rare and singu-

lar beauty, flowers unknown in other parts of the world, a river of crystal waters, and for a background the snow-capped mountains, most picturesque in outline. In the center of the vale stood a large building, of unhewn granite, its architecture strange and imposing. Above the main entrance, was an inscription in Sanscrit, which the Brahman interpreted as "THE HALL OF LEARNING." Amriti led the way toward the entrance, and at their approach, the portals, bearing many mysterious emblems, slowly opened, as if by invisible hands. The Chela remained standing upon the last step. The master took the lead, and the Bishop followed. The doors opened, not into a room but into an open court, about fifty feet square. In the center stood erect a large human skeleton, with bleached bones, with wings, and in the dexter hand a scythe the point of which indicated the hour on a sun-dial. In the other was a scroll of parchment on which was written in Sanscrit: "*Heed Thou This.*" Having traversed the court, the travellers halted before an arched entrance bearing the inscription: "*Thou art but dust, and to dust thou shalt return.*" Both passed under an archway leading to a large hall, at the end of which a stage or platform was erected, above which were doors. To one of them the Brahman directed the Bishop, and opening it they found themselves in a small chamber, with cot, table, bureau, and chairs.

"Please rest yourself for a while," said the guide. "Food will be served to you in good time, and to-night you will take part in the evening exercises of the first degree in occultism."

Cordially saluting the Prelate, the Brahman retired, and Angelo, throwing himself on the couch, exhausted by travel and the emotions of the day, sank into a sound and refreshing sleep.

CHAPTER IV.

AFTER sleeping soundly for an hour or so, Bishop Angelo awoke refreshed. A Chela was in his room, serving a tempting meal of fruit, milk, bread, tea and jellies, which duty performed, he retired with a respectful obeisance. With an appetite sharpened by the keen air of the mountains, the Bishop did full justice to the edibles spread before him, and having satisfied his hunger, disposed himself to await the close of day. The sun sank behind the snow-capped peaks of Himalay, pouring its golden flood over a landscape of surpassing loveliness. The sunset faded into dusk, and the dusk into darkness. Faintly, through the last pale tint of amethyst shone the constellation of Andromeda, and as through the space that severs a Universe, the Polar Bear shot forth its trembling rays toward the Southern Cross. The Bishop had suffered all that man can suffer ; his ambition had been destroyed and the one whose memory he cherished with that ceaseless affection, 'so rare in men,' was to him as the dead. As from the grave he had risen to a higher life, to a career of which he dreamed not, to which he had never aspired, though perhaps for that very reason it had fallen to his lot.

But what was this train of thought which now possessed him and why was he here? Was he again to tread the threshold of a living death, or would there be revealed to him the promise of a better and nobler life? What would the Holy Father say?

At this moment he was aroused from his reverie by a

rap at the door, followed by the entrance of the Brahman, who thus addressed him :

“The initiates of the first degree are now assembling in the adjoining hall. In a few moments my brother will be summoned to appear before the great Master. Meanwhile let us ask the Infinite Father to inspire us with his Holy Spirit, and prepare us for the ceremonies.”

Both knelt and addressed a fervent prayer to the Author of all things, the Bishop devoutly and earnestly beseeching that the truth might be unfolded to him,—God’s truth in all the strange and marvellous matters which he was now investigating.

“O, mighty Spirit of the Infinite,” he cried aloud, with uplifted hands and eyes ; “Thou knowest the inmost recesses of my heart ! Thou knowest the dark and secret longing of my soul to learn in what way I best may serve Thee ; in what way to guide and help my fellow creatures on the upward path to Thee. With that object am I here, in these mysterious recesses of the mountains. Teach me thy will, O God ! Teach me to understand thy divine purpose, so that I may conform my life to it, and spread thy sacred truth among my fellow-men, as their guide to a heavenly home. If these miracle-workers are in possession of thy truth ; if these reputed holy men of the Himalayas understand it in a higher degree than other brotherhoods, if they live nearer to thy heart ; then, O my Divine Master, pour down thy blessings on them, and grant me also a share in their knowledge. Develop my understanding ; make me worthy to acquire their wisdom, worthy to receive thy perfect truth ! ’

“So let it be,” echoed the Brahman.

At this moment three distinct raps were given at the door.

"The time has come," he continued, and taking the Bishop by the hand, led him to the hall, and placed him in charge of two guides, who stood, with staves of bamboo in hand, one on each side of the entrance.

Many neophytes were present, robed in yellow vestments, and stationed along the four sides of the hall. Three men of stately and imposing mien, attired in white robes, were seated on a raised dais, the eldest or High Priest somewhat above the others. His frame was tall and wiry, and from his thin face, a snow-white beard fell half-way down his chest, while his long silvery locks hung in clusters over his shoulders. His presence was dignified and impressive.

The guides, with reverential steps, conducted the Bishop to a position in front of the dais, whereupon the three wise men thrice struck the floor simultaneously with their staves. At this signal, the one on the right of the High Priest arose, and in a solemn voice demanded :

"Who comes here ? "

The guides answered together :

"A candidate for initiation in the mystic brotherhood of the wise men of the East."

"Let him step forward."

The Bishop drew close to the platform and bowed before the High Priest.

"What brings you here ? " asked the same brother.

"The hope of learning more of God's truth."

"Is that your only motive ? Have you not also a desire to obtain some knowledge of the mysterious powers which our brothers possess, in order to perform their so-called miracles ? "

"My desire is to know the truth, in order to conform more closely to the wishes of the Infinite Father. Fur-

thermore, as my mission on earth is to guide and elevate man, I earnestly long to direct him aright on the road to salvation. Concerning the possession of occult powers, I wish not for them, except so far as they could aid me in carrying out the mission of my life."

"It is well. Let the candidate be conducted to the altar."

In the center of the hall stood a lofty shrine, to which the guides immediately led the Bishop. As soon as they had halted in front of it, the same priest continued :

"Upon this altar you may see the Christian Bible, the Koran of Mohammed, the Shastras Upanishades, and the Holy Scriptures of the Brahman and Buddhist. Are you willing to accept the truth from whatever source it comes ? "

"The real truth comes only from one source, and that is God. I am willing so to accept it."

"It is well," said the wise man, and returning to his seat, silence reigned throughout the vast hall.

After a few moments the High Priest arose, and advancing a few steps with solemn mien thus spoke in grave and sonorous accents :

"In coming to us, you have been impelled by a noble impulse. We well know that your soul is wrapped up in the Divine Spirit, and that your only aim is to do good, by guiding the children of men to the summit of the lofty height on which they become the children of God. We will dispense with the customary ordeals of the first degree, except so far as it is required that al' candidates for initiation should submit to them. Their object is to impress the candidate with the necessity of ignoring self for the benefit of others ; to obliterate his personality, and to merge his love of self in the love for others in the universality of being. Your past life has been so

devoid of personality ; you have so constantly labored for humanity with the most disinterested motives, that you entered unconsciously into the first degree many years ago, in fact from the time when you became Brother Angelo, in the Italian convent of the Trappists. The second part of the first degree of occultism, I must explain to you at length, for it contains the fundamental tenets upon which the Eastern wisdom is based. It gives the key to the awful mystery of Involution and Evolution, and explains how God or Parabrahm—the pure, primæval, divine essence—descended into and became matter, and how matter, through evolution, returns gradually to God, and will again become pure, primæval, divine essence, or Parabrahm.”

Here the High Priest resumed his seat, whereupon Bishop Angelo's conductors gave three loud raps with their staves on the floor of the hall, a signal for the neophytes to be seated. A seat was also brought for the Prelate. This done, the High Priest continued :

“To make you readily and thoroughly understand this great mystery, let us take by way of illustration a piece of ice, which we will call inert matter. Apply to it a higher temperature and it becomes water. In this state the ice will have undergone a change, and advanced a step in its evolutionary process ; will, in consequence, have higher qualities. It can be utilized as drink for man, beast, and plant ; for motive power, and is a solvent of matter, which the piece of ice could not be.

“A step further in its evolution, and under a still higher temperature, the ice becomes steam. This steam has more potentialities than either ice or water ; it is invisible, it has more mobility than water, is capable of expansion, has more properties, and is possessed of more of the attributes of force. One step higher and we have

what, for a lack of a more suitable phrase, is called super-heated steam. This man has not, as yet, been able to control. It is completely invisible. Its potentialities are immense, incomprehensible ; so much so that some of our most terrific earthquakes are believed to be caused by the water of the ocean coming in contact with subterranean fires and producing super-heated steam in large quantities, thereby uplifting the crust of earth, for hundreds of leagues.

“Another stage in the evolution of that piece of ice, and it becomes the ether of the scientist, filling all inter-planetary space. This ether is identical with the Akasa of the occultist, contains the essential elements of everything in existence, and is one of the organizing and life-giving forces of the Universe.

“Still another step and this piece of ice becomes celestial essence, or an atmosphere in which creatures near to God have their being. A few steps more in the evolutionary process, and it has become the essence of Parabrahm or God Himself.”

The Bishop was mute with astonishment at this beautiful definition of matter and its return to the higher elements, even to its Creator. The philosophy appeared to him sublime, and it needed only a scientific verification to make him accept it with joy.

“This verification by science, you will have, my dear brother,” said the Master to the Bishop, reading the nascent thought in his brain, and continued :

“So you see that every thing that exists is God. We have selected the piece of ice as the manifestation of the Eternal in its most condensed and material aspect, and still containing in a latent state all the potentialities and possibilities of the Omnipotent.

“So with the mineral kingdom ; its rocks, earth, etc.—

the coarsest manifestation of the Deity—still contain in a dormant condition, all the divine powers and attributes which are destined, through eons of evolutionary process, to return to their Maker and become one with Him.

“The material Universe, with all that it contains, is but a vast alembic, whose function is to distill or convert matter into spirit:—a furnace, as it were, for the sublimation, a retort for the etherialization of matter.

“In this grand laboratory of God, the brain of man is the first apparatus which can convert matter into force, into thought force; and that power, everlasting in its effect, is a very potent factor in the evolutionary process of all things, either a baneful, thwarting force, or helpful and sublime, the very handmaid of the Heavenly Father in the fulfillment of his designs. Is there anything in this exposition which your science cannot admit?”

“This is the noblest and most divine system of cosmogony I have ever heard expounded, and the only one, that seems worthy of Deity,” replied the Bishop enthusiastically.

“As the Holy Scriptures say,” continued the Master, in a solemn but musical voice, “‘In the beginning all was fire;’ it was the divine fire, it was God, or Parabrahm in his pure essence; the inscrutable, the incomprehensible, the omnipotent, the omniscient, the omni-conscient; but all was essence and unmanifested.

“The days of creation are the periods of involution, when God descends into matter, and becomes manifest in the visible or material Universe. This process of involution is exactly the reverse of the process of evolution, which I have illustrated to you by the block of ice.

“The last product of involution and the coarsest, was the mineral kingdom. There, involution ended, and

then was a period of rest, of apparent immobility, during which the force of involution was converted into a force of evolution by the emission of the "Word" whose vibrations gave a new direction to cosmic force, this force guiding all atoms of matter.

"The emission of this Word, my dear brother, is the awful mystery of mysteries. But when the third degree shall reveal to you this arcanum, you will readily understand, as you have already studied the effect of vibratory motions upon matter, that in a period when two forces are equally balanced, or have perfectly neutralized one another, then one great sonorous "Word," with decided and justly calculated vibrations can so affect neutral atoms as to give them, through a newly created polarity, a positive momentum in a determinate direction, and thus send them on a new road, or mission, loaded with new attractions and repulsions, to the true fulfillment of their new destiny. This happened; and that destiny is the evolution of matter back into God or Parabrahm. Can this be made to harmonize with your physical science?"

"It seems to me," said the Bishop with evident satisfaction, "to be transcendently beautiful and scientifically correct."

"And now we have before us the crude, bare mineral kingdom, after just receiving its first evolutionary impulse through the vibrations of the awful Word. The atoms have had their polarity changed, and a new departure is inaugurated upward toward their divine source.

"In these rocks of all hues and characters, in these brilliant metallic masses of all colors, are contained the possibilities of all plants, animals, human beings, spirits and all the angels of succeeding ages.

"So, my dear Bishop, leaving those primitive periods,

and coming down to our days, we ourselves in truth, have been these rocks and mineral masses ; we have been these plants, with their beautiful hues or banefnl properties ; we have been these animals, kind or cruel, and we have been these undeveloped men that we find in primitive races ; furthermore, my dear brother, not only have we been what they are, but in time they will be what we are to-day, in their upward march through Infinity to God. Do you find any moral principle underlying this theory ? ”

“ Yes. It illustrates to me very beautifully, the universality of being, the solidarity and inter-dependence existing between all things. It should inculcate in every one first, a greater love for our brother man, and second, a greater respect for every existing thing in the Universe. It shows plainly that whatever is, be it ever so insignificant in our eyes, has a right to existence, for that existence is a necessary condition of its evolution. To cut short that existence is to compel a re-incarnation, in order to attain all the experiences of each existence, and to reach a higher point of progress.”

“ Just so, my brother,” continued the Master, “ and in all your future preachings, inculcate well this idea into the masses. The horse they so unmercifully whip, that horse they have been ; and what they are to-day, in some future time that horse will become. So in killing wantonly and indiscriminately beings of a lower order, man is cutting short destinies in process of evolution, is waylaying them on their road-side, and if their deaths be not necessary for his own support or preservation, he will be punished for their destruction.”

“ Indeed ! ” said the Bishop, remembering that he had been a great sportsman when captain of the guard, and had killed many an innocent bird and animal.

"Everything in existence has certain definite tasks to fulfill in this grand drama of destiny, of evolution. And the true fulfillment of its own destiny is as dear and important to every particular thing, be it plant or animal, as the fulfillment of our own destiny is to ourselves."

"This philosophy, revered Master, is fraught with moral results of the highest order. I now understand better the meaning of some sentences to be found in your sacred writings: 'If thou murderest thy neighbor, thou killest thyself; if thou dost steal, thou dost rob thyself.'"

"Just so, and thus it is also with slander, uncharitableness, intolerance, hatred and all other human vices. Do you fully understand the high morality here enthroned?"

"From this system of philosophy we can deduce a series of ethical principles, and frame a code of sound moral laws, which would be exceedingly beneficial, especially to the old world, that stands so much in need of them."

"Thus far we have established, as you intimate, very truly, a solid basis for a code of morality to be used in earth life. Now, let us proceed a little further, and see if, from the general evolutionary process, as illustrated by the block of ice, and from our system of cosmogony, we cannot deduce some higher laws destined to guide us in our higher life."

"Following the processes of evolution and involution, we recognize that the acting agent, the real, the eternal force of the Universe is an invisible, intangible one, constantly changing, ever shifting and transmuting the visible or tangible which is the unreal, the unreliable, the evanescent."

"Applying this truth to ourselves," continued the Mas-

ter, "our body, the outer man, is not the real man; the real man is invisible, he is the force impelling the body upward, fostering its real growth, aiding its unfoldment, silently working out its progressive and evolutionary destiny.

"That beneficent force is the soul, and that soul is the real self, that which is immortal, which must and will return to Deity."

"The possibility of a code of ethics is visible here," said the Bishop.

"Yes, brother, of transcendent ethics, and that code has been established and taught for many centuries before your era, in this sacred temple of the Himalayan Brotherhood.

"It points out clearly that all the pains we take to cater to the tastes and inclinations of the body are labors expended upon a stranger, labors which do not reach our real *ego* at all. To be more plain, I would say that all our striving to gratify the appetites of the body is time lost, as far as the real man is concerned, and this is so true that all undue gratification of the senses is invariably accompanied by pain and deception of some kind. In fact, the body of a man, is either the temple or the prison house of his soul.

"In all other beings which have no free will, the inner force that directs the general evolution of things works its way to a destined issue. Outside conditions may advance or retard it a little, but those things or beings will follow of necessity the road the Almighty laid out for them in the beginning. But man, having a free will, can counteract or paralyze this inner force, the upward impulse of his soul; and by continually fostering his sensual appetites, by giving full satisfaction to all the pleasures the body craves, can neutralize the evolutionary

force, stifle the appeals of the soul, and thus hold it a poor shackled prisoner in a dark cell."

"Alas!" sighed the Bishop, "it is only too true, and too often the case in this miserable world of ours."

"The true man in us, then," continued the Master, "is our soul. If we mean to find real satisfaction, content, and happiness in this world, we must take sides with our soul and conform ourselves to the laws of the divine scheme of evolution,—of our return toward Parabrahm.

"As our soul grows, so do our earthly attractions wither. The battle wages fiercely at first, but the soul soon gets the upper hand in any well-disciplined warrior. Then life tends constantly upward, and we feel that we live in harmony with the laws of God.

"The lessons gathered then from the exercises of the first degree are as follows: Heed them, dear brother.

"Supreme laws of involution and evolution.

"Realization of the universality of being, and consequent solidarity of all existing things in their common evolutionary pilgrimage, and the final absorption of the *ego* into the all.

"The moral lessons are:

"1st. Universal brotherhood;

"2nd. Respect for all existences;

"3rd. The real;

"4th. The unreal;

"5th. The cultivation of the real;

"6th. The respect and tender care for the true and helpful functions of the unreal.

"Does the candidate agree with what has been said? Does his soul find food or affinity in the deep mysteries of the divine laws which have been explained to him?"

"My soul rejoices at what it has received here to-night, and in fact, ever since I have set out upon this journey."

said the Bishop with deep emotion. "The doctrines, though new to me, appear divine; but to be fully understood, they will doubtless need more elucidation and reflection. I am most glad that I came, and grateful to the Masters who have permitted my visit to this sacred retreat."

The guides arose, and striking the floor three times with their staves, brought all the neophytes to their feet.

Beckoning the Bishop to follow them, they marched slowly toward the stage, and ascending it, brought the candidate before the High Priest. The latter took a yellow robe, and gave it to the assistant on his left, telling him to clothe the neophyte with this insignium of the first degree.

The Master, assisted by the guides, placed the robe on the Bishop. Before fastening it, the assistant on the right stepped forward, and placed around his neck a string, on which was suspended a square piece of cloth, scapular like, on both sides of which were drawn or painted some mysterious emblems.

"This," said the Master on the right, "is a talisman. It has been blessed at the temple by all the assembled Masters; which means that they have joined hands, while they concentrated their wills upon it, to impregnate it with such aura or influence that, as long as you wear it, you may be victorious over all your enemies—your soul enemies, of course. Now that you are a neophyte, temptations will come to you in every form, and from all sides; the strength of your soul will be tested in many ways, for to-night the doors of the dark regions have been opened against you, and out of them, the demons will rush in legions. But have faith in the Infinite Father, an unswerving faith; take this talisman in hand, or better, put it upon your forehead, while the

assault lasts, and say constantly this occult word which, when oft repeated, puts invariably the evil ones to flight:

“A-o-u-m ! A-o-u-m ! A-o-u-m !

“Repeat it with this intonation ; try to imitate the true sounds and tones ; for, if properly uttered, the vibrations these words emit, will in a short time destroy the dark aura through which these malignant spirits communicate their influence, will clear the brain from all sensual thoughts and give it the necessary strength to say ‘no’ to all evil suggestions ; for, remember well that the evil spirits or elementaries make their most powerful assaults upon us, only when we feel physically weak, morally despondent, deeply troubled ; in fine, when our intellectual, moral and spiritual senses are at a low ebb, or partially paralyzed. Now listen, and try to imitate me.”

The Master commenced the intonations of the word “A-o-u-m” in a low, chanting voice, full of cadences and strange sounds. He closed his eyes, lifted his head, and opened his mouth wide at the letter A and gradually closed it as he pronounced the O and U, finally terminating with the purely nasal sound of M. He chanted the word several times, dwelling longer and longer upon the final sound, until the Bishop had learned them well and imitated them correctly.

“This word,” added the Master, “is the name given to the Godhead in His pure essence, in His unmanifest condition. It has been given from time immemorial, by the highest human beings living nearest to God, as the one word whose vibrations will surely disintegrate any evil auras, originating where they may.

“This sacred, awful word must never be pronounced aloud, except when spiritual darkness is near, or when members of our order are present.”

At a signal from the Grand Master, the guides gave

three raps thrice upon the floor, bringing all to a kneeling posture.

The two Masters advanced one step toward the Bishop, and put each a hand upon his shoulders, their other hand resting upon the shoulders of the High Priest. The latter took a small gold cup, filled with pure oil, extracted from the seeds of a plant growing exclusively in the gardens of the temple. This oil was known as the only one that could fully retain all the magnetic influences or auras imparted to it. It had been consecrated or magnetized by the great Grand Master himself, and he had given to it all the divine influx which he himself possessed.

The High Priest dipped his thumbs into the oil, and placed them upon the forehead of the Bishop, between his eyebrows, the palms of his hands and fingers being extended over the brain. He remained motionless, as if absorbed in deep concentration of mind.

After the hands of the High Priest had rested upon his head a few minutes, the Bishop, although his eyes were closed, appeared to see opening before him, a vast horizon, slowly filling with a golden light. Soon, he discovered landscapes of the most beautiful character, and now he saw beings moving about, surrounded with such bright auras, that they looked like walking suns. A band of these angelic beings approached slowly. When near enough, the chief spoke to him thus :

“My son has been consecrated to our sacred order, and is now being anointed. This opens his spiritual senses, and also breaks the barrier, which prevented his access to the realm of the higher and subtler forces of nature. Thus far, thou hast seen, through physical science, only the outward manifestations of these forces ; henceforth, progressively, thou shalt see their inner work-

ings and laws. The way will be shown thee to come to us at any time, when thou shalt need more light. Farewell; have faith! Thy destiny is great, and the work allotted thee of vast import; again, brother, farewell."

The High Priest removed his hands from the Bishop's head and the vision disappeared. He said:

"Thy name in our mystic order will be the same thou hast received in the Italian cloister: Angelo. Mayest thou continue to be true to it, and may Parabrahm overshadow thee!"

Again the guides rapped thrice on the floor, and the neophytes arose. The three Masters slowly retired.

After having led Angelo around the hall, the neophytes saluting him as he passed; the guides conducted him to his chamber, where they left him.

When alone, the Bishop sank into an arm-chair, and began to reflect upon all he had experienced since the ceremonies of his initiation commenced. As soon as he entered the hall where the neophytes were assembled, he felt a kind of magnetic influence creeping slowly over him. His brain seemed to grow clearer, and his whole body lighter, more ethereal, as it were.

When the Master expounded to him the occult laws of involution and evolution, he seemed to understand the truth of them intuitively, and every moral principle deduced from that beautiful philosophical system, seemed to engrave itself upon his heart in the most clear and definite manner. His soul assimilated it, not only readily, but with avidity, and realized in its fullness the universal brotherhood not only of man but of all things, through a common final destiny. He understood the evanescence of the visible, and the permanence of the invisible; the nature of the unreal and of the real; the

worthlessness of the *ego* as a separate entity ; and the supreme worth of the human soul.

That which plunged the Bishop in the deepest meditation, however, was the vision he had seen when the High Priest had his hands upon his head. This anointing seemed to have caused a real physiological change in the molecules of his brain. His thoughts were like flashes of lightning, clear and well defined ; they were all of a superior and spiritualized nature. His faith also was immeasurably strengthened ; for all lingering doubts about the true nature of the Himalayan Brotherhood and their transcendental achievements, had been swept away, as a fog before the sun.

At this point his reflections were interrupted by three raps at his door.

It was his friend the Brahman, who had first introduced him to the hall of learning. On seeing him the Bishop smiled with satisfaction.

“ Welcome, Master,” he said, “ my gratitude is thine, for my heart is full of joy.”

“ I have come by order of the Grand Master,” said he, “ to disclose to you the occult secret which it is necessary for an initiate to know, so that he may enter the world of causes at will.

“ There he will perceive the subtle laws governing the Universe, from the simplest to the most recondite. The knowledge of this secret will give you at first, certain minor powers and privileges, such as reading the hidden thoughts of persons with whose sphere or aura you will be brought in contact. Later on, through repeated and careful practice, it will enable you to leave your material body, and to travel in your astral one to any place you may desire, and that almost instantaneously. After more experience, you will be able to make your astral

body visible and tangible, so that you may greet your friends wherever they may be. Are you ready?"

"I am," answered the Bishop in a firm tone of voice.

"Take an easy position in this arm-chair, so that you may sleep at ease."

"Sleep?"

"Yes, your body will sleep perhaps, but your soul will be more awake than ever.

"Deep and continuous meditation upon any subject is almost impossible. Let any one try to concentrate his thoughts, only one single minute, upon any metaphysical subject; and he will find, that within that short space of time, some foreign ideas will have intruded. Far back, our Masters discovered that by focusing our eyes upon some object at a distance of three or four inches in front of them, a pressure will be caused upon the muscles leading to the sides of the head. This pressure does not interfere with the train of thought upon which we are meditating, but does effectually keep out every foreign thought.

"But this is not the most important result obtained by concentrating the visual rays at a small distance from the face. You must know or be made aware of this great truth: that most of the soul powers and also those which the Masters possess over material things, are due to their thorough knowledge of the laws of nature, human magnetism and psychology. You will remember that this morning, in my bungalow, you explained to me how auras, with their zones of radiation, were discovered by the experiments of medical students upon hysterical patients in some asylums for the insane in France. You will also remember that these patients, in order to be made intensely sensitive to the auras of substances put before them and to be influenced by them, had to be

mesmerized first, or put into a hypnotic condition, as these students call it.

“Well now, listen attentively, for I am going to disclose to you one of our most occult truths. All terrestrial as well as celestial beings have auras; all worlds, all planets have them. God, Parabrahm, the Infinite Father has an aura, and it is this aura that permeates the whole Universe. It is the influence that this exerts which guides all destinies, and causes the evolution of all things, along the same upward road to a final goal or absorption in Parabrahm. All substances, plants and animals, submit to this influence passively and are carried peaceably along their evolutionary path. The aura of God is the spiritual protoplasm upon which our souls are allowed to draw at will. Let this truth be the subject of your deepest meditations.

“Man alone, after attaining a certain altitude of thought or spiritual intellectuality, can absorb and assimilate a greater amount of the universal aura, according to the degree in which he is prepared to receive it. But as the hysteric patients, owing to their pathological condition, are already hyper-sensitive, and must furthermore be put into the magnetic state that they may sense the auras of surrounding substances,—so must the mystic, whose nervous system has become hyper-sensitive not through sickness, mark well, as in the case of hysteric persons, but through study, meditation, discipline, silence, repression of the senses, and the cultivation of the highest morality, be mesmerized at first, in order to become influenced by the auras of the higher celestial beings, or by that of the Infinite Spirit or Parabrahm Himself.

“But as every human being, who is mesmerized by another, becomes a slave to his mesmerizer, and is com-

pletely under his control for good or evil, the Himalayan Brothers are not allowed to mesmerize any one.

"Now, listen well, for this truth is most important. Every brother mesmerizes himself at will, thus putting himself *en rapport* upon earth with his brother man, and in the super-sensuous world with higher influences, even up to direct communion with Parabrahm.

"Now, I have come to teach you how to mesmerize yourself, or induce the hypnotic state.

"Hold the end of your finger in front of your face and look at it steadily, keeping in mind, although passively, the object you desire to obtain ; state also to yourself the time when you wish to come back to your normal condition.

"But be sure" said the Brahman, in a grave and solemn voice "that before sitting down for self-magnetization, you commence with an ardent prayer to God to show you His truth ; also be sure to have upon you the talisman for personal protection from evil. This is necessary ; because when sitting for self-mesmerization, you become entirely passive. All the doors of your soul are wide open to any influences, whether good or evil.

"Your talisman, remember, is but a piece of wool taken from a young lamb, spun and woven by virgin hands, and blessed by our Grand Master in assembly. Are you ready?"

The Brahman placed a table near the arm-chair occupied by the Bishop, and rested the elbow of the latter upon it ; also placing the end of the index finger a few inches from his face, he then told him to look.

The eyes of the Bishop assumed a fearful strabismus. His endeavor to keep them focused at so short a distance succeeded only partially. His eyes kept moving to and

fro, and the muscles leading from them to the temples of the head, were painfully strained.

"Let me try the silver ball," said the Brahman. Taking a bright little ball, the size of a boy's marble, and holding it before the Bishop's eyes, he said:

"Now, think on the desired subject and mentally resolve to awake in half an hour."

"I have done so."

"Yes; now look steadily."

The Bishop focused his eyes upon the ball. They seemed more steady. After the lapse of five minutes, the Brahman raised one of Angelo's legs to a horizontal position, where for a moment it remained. He then lifted the right arm, and as he returned it to its former position, a smile of satisfaction overspread his features. "It is well," he said, and casting an affectionate look at the Prelate, left him alone in his cell.

After gazing at the little ball about three minutes longer, the Bishop was conscious of a great strain upon the temporal muscles. A luminous mist seemed to fill his field of vision, hiding the ball as well as everything else in the room; in fact it appeared as if for the moment he had lost the sense of sight. The mist which grew more and more luminous, arose seemingly from some point within the brain. This in a little while gradually diminished, darkness overshadowed him and numbness took possession of his frame. As these impressions became more intense, he felt his personality slowly dissolving, until finally a state of unconsciousness supervened, preceded by a sensation of falling. When he revived, he found himself travelling through the air, with inconceivable velocity. He saw behind him a thin streak of light, like a golden wire. Tracing back this thread, he found that it terminated in his body,

which sat motionless in the arm-chair in his cell at the monastery. On he travelled, crossing oceans and continents, for light had returned to him. Trains were speeding on their tracks, ships were gliding through the sea, and great lakes and dark forests lay beneath him, but all moving things seemed to him as tortoises.

“Compared with the speed of his flight,
The tempests themselves lagged behind,
And the swift-winged arrows of light.”

Soon he found himself again before the royal palace, which he had seen in the magic mirror. Like a flash he passed into one of its rooms, and there a strange sight was revealed to him. With intense pain upon their features, and pale as death, Queen Dolora and the Duchess de Buonaceli were entering the banquet-hall where a scene of degrading debauch was being enacted. Officers and courtesans were drinking freely and singing obscene songs, and at the head of the table sat the King.

Dolora advanced toward the women.

“Begone,” she said, with queenly dignity, pointing toward the door. “Begone.”

Those whom she addressed, turned toward her with a half-drunken look, and, bursting into a loud, sarcastic laugh, put their arms around the King’s neck. Utterly shocked, the Queen, with tears filling her eyes, made a pathetic appeal to the monarch. She entreated him in the name of morality and virtue, to respect at least the place where she and her children were dwelling.

“I will bring my children here,” she said in indignant tones, “and show them the degradation to which their father has fallen.”

"General, and you Colonel," said the King to two of the guests, "conduct the Queen to her apartments."

"Infamous!" she ejaculated. "I will not bear this outrage. I will inform the people."

"General, do your duty," commanded the King.

Thereupon the officer seized the Queen by the arm and forcibly turned her toward the door through which she had entered.

Flushed with indignation she was about to resist, when the Duchess de Buonaceli gently took her hand, and with tears entreated her to return to their apartments.

Reluctantly the Queen assented, and as she led her forth, the Duchess addressed the General :

"Most brave and valiant soldier, elevated to the highest rank in the army, to sacrifice thy life for thy country and its honor, we absolve thee henceforth from this noble duty. Spare thy precious life for other battle fields like this," contemptuously pointing to the array of empty bottles lying about. "You can win here other crosses and decorations," she added, as she tore the cross of the Legion of Honor from his breast, and threw it at his feet.

The General exasperated, put his hand impulsively on the hilt of his sword ; but the Duchess gave him a look so full of haughty contempt that he stood motionless as one paralyzed.

Supporting the half-fainting Queen, the two disconsolate ladies left the room.

The Bishop, on seeing the action of the General, rushed forward as though to stop him, entirely oblivious of the fact that he was present only in his astral body. His failure, however, to make himself heard, recalled to him this fact. He followed the Queen and her noble

companion to their apartments. When Dolora arrived she swooned. The Duchess summoned a maid, and together they laid her gently upon a couch.

At this point the Bishop felt an irresistible impulse to return to India. He found himself again travelling in an aerial current, and soon perceived his motionless body resting in the arm-chair. An instant later he awoke, and looking at the clock on the mantel-piece of his cell, saw that just half an hour had elapsed since he commenced to look at the silver ball.

It is impossible to describe the thoughts that surged through Angelo's mind on returning to his material body.

"Is this all a dream?" he said, "or am I becoming insane? Did I see that scene of debauch? Is Dolora as miserable as I saw her there?"

And his reason answered: "Yes."

The Bishop's nerves were unstrung, and as it was late he retired to sleep. But sleep would not come to him. Fifty times he turned his weary head upon the pillow. At length after a most fervent prayer to the Infinite Spirit, he grew calmer, and slowly sank to rest. In his dreams he saw Dolora; not Dolora, the unhappy Queen, but Dolora, the young, intellectual, cultured daughter of the King of France, in the cottage of her nurse. He was beside her. She confessed to him how dearly she loved him. He was at her feet; he kissed her hands passionately, and this time he was alone with her. She bade him rise and sit beside her. She moved closer to him, looked passionately in his eyes; an instant later she was in his arms; he pressed her tenderly to his heart, soothing her with endearing names. Their lips met; her head resting upon his shoulder. He was telling her with all the eloquence his heart could command how much he loved her, how readily he would

sacrifice his life for her. Again their lips met and Angelo's soul thrilled with the knowledge that his passion for Dolora was reciprocated.

Here the Bishop awoke, with heart palpitating; chest heaving with heavy respiration; cheeks inflamed and nerves excited; he reached for his talisman, but could not find it; he remembered that he had taken it off while undressing. At last he found it beside his yellow robe, and immediately put it to his forehead, repeating the mystic word "A-o-u-m" with the ritual intonations.

Calm was gradually restored to his troubled brain; his nerves were quieted; his thoughts naturally went up to the Heavenly Father in silent prayer, and he was soon himself again. At this moment he heard a voice, like that of the Grand Master.

"Beware! thou hast been warned, that the spirits of evil always powerfully tempt any neophyte of the Order, and use their mephitic power to turn him from his purpose. Never again part with the talisman. May the Holy Spirit rest on thee; good-night."

The Bishop then fell into a sound and refreshing sleep. At dawn of day his Brahman friend entered his cell, and invited him to take a walk with him around the monastery, enjoining him not to speak to any one he might meet, as the forenoon was the time for meditation and silence. After partaking of a light breakfast, both started on their walk. The air was balmy and bracing. A gentle breeze was whispering in the trees and caressing the flowers.

Bishop Angelo felt the tonic influence of the atmosphere, and he inhaled with satisfaction the oxygenated air of the Himalayas. The scenery before him was majestic. Huge masses of granite, tall firs, running

sparkling streams, snow-capped mountains covered with a mellow, velvety haze, reminded him of Italy. The sky, transparent as ether, had that delicate blue tint, which poets describe as conducive to reverie. It was highly promotive of contemplation and philosophic thought. Here and there the Prelate saw a yellow-robed friar sitting in some secluded spot, absorbed in deep meditation. Strange to say, he fancied once or twice that he had seen some of the friars before; their faces appeared familiar to him. He may have met them, for theirs were European faces. Yes, surely; there was a barrister he had known in France, and who, he remembered now, had always been a lover of mystic lore. A little further on was an Englishman; yes, it was he whom he had met at the English court when the King of France had paid a secret visit to that sovereign. These unexpected encounters, puzzled, but on the other hand encouraged him greatly, as he now knew that the path on which he had entered, had been trodden before him by Europeans, and people of marked intelligence and high social standing.

The Bishop spent one week in practising the various exercises prescribed in the first degree of occultism. The instructions, as stated before, related to the transcendental problem of involution and evolution; that the same beginning and the same life and the same end were for all that is, that has been, and that will be; that all things are destined to return to God through the various stages of evolution, to become finally identified with Him, and so to partake of all His glorious attributes.

He was directed to meditate upon the eternity of force and its indestructibility; upon the assertion that matter is force, made visible; that God in His essence, is pure force, is absolute consciousness; that in this

exalted, unfathomable state He is invisible, unmanifest, though containing all the elements of matter, and of force.

In the manifest or visible Universe, force is the proprietor of matter, its master in fact, to which the latter must inevitably submit.

The occult power acquired by Bishop Angelo, was that of self-mesmerization in an instant and at will. Thereby he had gained the faculty of sensing all auras; in other words, of ascertaining the moral, intellectual or spiritual status of every human being with whom he was brought in contact; of knowing their most secret thoughts, propensities and idiosyncracies. He had received also the power to travel readily in his astral body, to any far-distant scenes in which he might be interested.

CHAPTER V.

At the end of the first week after his initiation as a neophyte, the Brahman notified Bishop Angelo that, on the next day, he would take him to the hall of the second degree of the Brotherhood to be duly initiated. He advised him meanwhile to retire to his cell, to fast, pray and meditate profoundly.

At the appointed time, the Brahman called upon Brother Angelo, and together they went to a building specially consecrated to the second degree.

This edifice was at some distance from that of the first degree, and of a more imposing character. Above the main entrance was an inscription in Sanscrit :

"As it is above, so is it below; as it is in the skies, so it is upon the earth; as is the Macrocosm, so is the Microcosm."

Bishop Angelo could not suppress an exclamation of delight as he was conducted into a scientific laboratory well furnished and of large proportions. Passing through it, he noticed with pleasure many instruments with which he was familiar. But he was no less astonished to find there much apparatus of strange construction, with which he was entirely unacquainted, the use of which he could not even conjecture.

In an adjoining room, he found a chemical laboratory, not only perfectly equipped, but containing alembics, retorts, furnaces, flasks, and tubes of strange and wonderful construction.

The place resembled the working chamber of an

alchemist, as we find it described in old records, rather than the laboratory of modern universities.

Opening a side door, the Brahman conducted his companion into the presence of a white robed brother of imposing presence, who was busily engaged in studying a manuscript, written on ancient papyrus and recently discovered in Egypt.

His features had more of the European caste than of the Hindoo. He rose at the approach of the visitors, seemed to be well pleased with his introduction to the Bishop, and said in a friendly tone of voice :

“ I am glad my brother has come, and I am happy to be granted the privilege of giving him instruction in the second degree.”

Putting away very carefully the Egyptian papyrus, he remarked to the Bishop’s companion :

“ My brother may leave the candidate in my care, and all will be well.”

The Brahman retired, making low obeisance, and casting an affectionate look at the Prelate.

“ Be seated, brother,” said the white-robed Master, “ and we shall begin at once, for your time at the Temple is limited.”

Angelo obeyed, whereupon the Master opened a beautiful case of sweet scented wood, and said, as he pointed to its contents :

“ This box is full of crystals, all perfect, and of divers material substances, carbonates, sulphates, nitrates, silicates, etcetera. Here again, in the second box, are the crystals of the pure metals, and in the third are jewels ; rubies, garnets, etcetera. All these crystals, being pure, possess a perfect geometrical form, and each form has for a base, one or other of the six fundamental types, viz : the perfect cube, the two right prisms, the rhom-

boid, and the two oblique prisms. Each of these crystals also has its north and south pole and its equatorial or dia-magnetism. In passing the points of a large rock crystal before the closed eyes of a sensitive, there will be immediately detected the warm or cold impression according to the pole presented. The crystals being geometrically perfect owing to the purity of their substances, have each individual auras with distinctive properties, thereby having characteristic attractions and repulsions. 'As it is below, so it is above.' Such crystals have their correspondences in the occult world. They represent perfect soul qualities without weaknesses, without bias, qualities absolutely reliable, and which assert themselves in a positive manner, under all circumstances of life.

"Before the crystal, however, has attained this purity, and this beautiful geometrical form, it must pass through many changes, many stages, and many purifying processes must be experienced."

Taking a handful of earth out of a little box beside him, the Master continued :

"This is common earth which I took from the garden this morning. As you see, I throw it into this basin of water and stir it. This muddy water is the image of the life of most men, when arrived at middle age. The mixture seems very impure, particles floating on the top, others suspended midway, and the greater mass lying at the bottom, apparently inert.

"This basin with its incongruous mixture is the true representative of the Karma of man. Every human being is a mixture like this, more or less impure, according to the condition of his Karma or soul-status.

"Every particle of substance, however, contained in this basin is directly related to, and has the possibilities of one of the crystals in this box. Each one is either a

carbonate, sulphate, nitrate, silicate, or some other salt of one of the pure metals; but these elements themselves are without geometrical form, because inharmoniously related by being thrown into contact with particles between which there exists no natural affinity. Still the element of usefulness is latent in every one of them, and each has its own aura with its distinctive attractions and repulsions, some very weak indeed, but all in a state of constant activity. These shapeless particles, not being in the form of crystals, have no well defined axis of polarization, or dia-magnetism; hence their attractions and repulsions are unequal, operating as it were, at random, displaying abnormal activities, ceaselessly counteracting each other, and thus leaving the mixture in the same incoherent and muddy condition.

"In man the immediate results of this want of harmony are evil and sickness. There is no evil *per se*; there is no sickness *per se*; both are the monstrous offspring of ill-mated parents and adverse conditions in life."

"Yes," said the Bishop, much interested in the Master's explanation, "this is the picture of the moral condition of man, when his passions have full sway over him, and the inordinate greed for money, or other debasing influences, blind his moral perceptions."

"Now," continued the Master, "let us come to a conclusion in regard to this mixture. Suppose we wish to restore to every particle its original purity, and highest form of crystalization. We will filter the contents of the basin, and allow the matter in solution to crystalize.

"The solids contained in the filter we will boil successively in the three acids; then dilute and filter them. Now adding successively pure chemical re-agents in order to accelerate the separation of substances pertain-

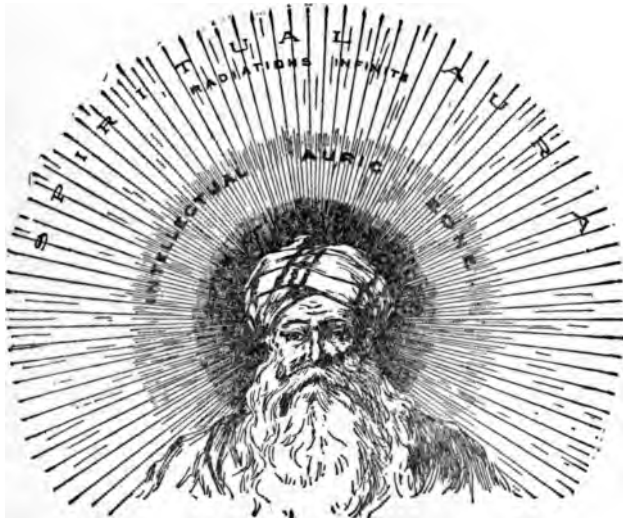
ing to a lower affinity, we see the elements purified by degrees, and through evaporation assuming their natural form of original crystalization.

“And thus again, my brother, the mystic legend, ‘as it is below, so it is above’ will be verified.

“At a certain period of life when the passions commence to abate, or when intellect or reason asserts itself, man examines himself critically, and after an honest survey of his moral status, determines to alter his course in life. Perhaps this determination has been caused by the awakening of his soul which, up to this time, has been slumbering under its material covering. This arousing of the soul to self-consciousness may have been brought about almost by accident; possibly by hearing the words of an eloquent divine, or from perusing a work replete with lofty and moral principles; but more frequently through being scourged by misfortune, or witnessing the death of one dearly beloved. Such incentives are represented by the pure chemical re-agents, segregating the higher from the lower affinities—the three acids and the fire process.

“The awakening of the soul to consciousness causes the first moral impulse; it lays out a road, and what is more, an upward one. The process of purification has set in; evil associations are broken off; philosophy and the higher sciences become objects of study; prayer, meditation upon things divine, and soul-inspiring music are factors impelling to an upward course. This immediately gives birth to a higher Karma, to the formation of a better quality of aura.

“Our Karma is the sum total of our auras. The instructions vouchsafed by the second degree make you aware, my brother, that there are three different kinds of aura in man. The auric zone, nearest to the head, and



THE ODIC FORCES GENERATED BY MAN.

emanating from the entire body, is the animal or nervous aura. The auric zone grafted or superimposed upon this, and radiating to a goodly distance, is the intellectual or super-nervous aura ; and the third auric zone, capable of radiating even into limitless space, is the spiritual or celestial aura.

“Man may have one aura only, or he may have two, or he may be the happy possessor of all three. Although these zones are interdependent, the animal one is the foundation for the construction of the intellectual, and the latter the basis for the spiritual one. If an individual be in perfect health and harmoniously constituted, his nervous aura will possess all the requirements for the formation of an intellectual auric zone. If this latter zone be formed through varied and solid intellectual attainments, it will constitute the firmest, best, and most fruitful basis for the formation of the spiritual or celestial auric zone.

“The greater the intellect of a man, the more favorable are his prospects for spiritual development. The smaller his intellect, so much the nearer will be his spiritual zone to the animal zone, and necessarily the more easily influenced by it. These are very important occult truths, my brother, and you are earnestly recommended to meditate deeply upon them.

“It is said, and truly, that there are open to man two avenues through which he can attain to the knowledge of spiritual things, and these are ‘Science and Faith.’ Through unbounded Faith, by annihilating the attractions of our senses, by fasting, constant prayer and meditation, by fervid aspirations toward the Infinite Father, and by leading an upright and exemplary life, the golden gates may be opened, and the humblest neophyte may enter. But I assure you, my brother, that

he will be there only as a visitor, a negative being, who has been admitted in virtue of his prayer and supplication; he will nevertheless, be happy, participating in the never-ending spiritual feasts of the supersensuous world. The man of science, however, upon whose largely developed intellectual auric zone has been grafted a bright spiritual zone, enters the golden gate as by birthright; he is at home there. He is positive, he is commanding; he directs, and is a real agent of the Almighty in the execution of the evolutionary laws.

"I have stated to you that the Karma of a man, is the sum total of his auric zones.

"The influence of these zones, for good or evil, upon all things with which they come in contact, but more especially human beings, you must now thoroughly understand. All influences exerted by man constitute his responsibility. The meaner his acts, the meaner his Karma, the more debasing his influence upon other people. Hence arises man's great duty, the purification of his Karma.

"Very high mysteries are connected with this Karma, which it is not in the province of the second degree to explain. Re-incarnation, through the effect of Karma, is but little understood, although the main idea of re-embodiment is undoubtedly true. The fallacy, generally accepted by many Buddhists, viz: that a human being is re-incarnated upon the earth after a score or more of centuries passed in the super-sensuous world; that he takes on a new body, composed of flesh, bones, and blood, and that he lives a similar earthly existence over again, is a material and gross idea of the re-incarnation of the auric forces evolved by man during his earth life. This much, my brother, I am allowed to say, but more anon about this very important subject and

the operations of Karma. I hope that the Supreme Master presiding over the third degree will some day vouchsafe an elucidation of the law of re-incarnation. We will now proceed to the laboratory of physical sciences."

"I have passed through that room already, Master, and was astonished at the large collection of apparatus you possess. Many of the instruments are entirely unknown to me."

"Yes, we are given to study, and our studies, aided by intuition and perceptive powers, are comparatively easy. I will give you an illustration of some of the results we have achieved. Here is a vibratory instrument."

"It looks somewhat like a church organ."

"So it does. It has some pipes; but it has also many other appliances and attachments. This apparatus is used for the discovery of the vibratory notes of the musical scale to which a body responds. Each body in the Universe is in vibratory harmony with a number of bodies of different natures, and also in repulsion with many others.

"You will perceive that with the tongue of every one of these so called organ pipes is connected a ribbon or minute band of laminated metal, to which the tongue transmits faithfully its own vibrations.

"Now, my brother, be kind enough to stand upon these metal bands, after having removed your sandals, and you will readily discover the musical note with which your body is in harmony. As the notes of the belfry respond to the voice of the watchman singing the hours of night, so will your body respond to the sound of these pipes when one of them is consonant with the vibrations which set in motion the atoms composing it."

Bishop Angelo, having removed his sandals, placed his feet upon the first metallic band.

The Master pressed a lever, and a pipe gave forth a deep base note, the vibrations of which could be easily distinguished. Observing the Bishop closely, but not noticing any change in him, the Master bade him step upon the next metallic band. More than twenty such bands were successively tried by the Bishop without experiencing any unusual sensation ; still, as the voice of the pipes grew deeper, a kind of tremor began to creep over his body. Finally the Master produced an exceedingly grave sound, with an intonation so deep, that it seemed almost impossible to be produced by any earthly instrument.

And now the Bishop quickly stepped down from the metallic band, turned pale, and breathing heavily, exclaimed :

“Never in my life have I experienced so strange a sensation. Every atom in my body seemed to tremble.”

Smiling kindly, the Master placed a large conch shell to the Bishop's ear.

\ “Do you hear a murmuring noise?”

“Yes, a low singing sound.”

“This is simply a sound intensifier, like the human ear. Taking a hint from this conchoidal form of the shell and its sound intensifying qualities, some old Masters devised an apparatus having all the powers of the shell, improving upon its form by the addition of many special contrivances. This is the apparatus,” pointing to a mysterious machine made of brass, and containing numerous interior chambers of spiral form, in outward appearance partaking both of the form of a conchoidal shell and of the human ear.

“This apparatus does not change the number of vi-

vibrations produced by the pipe or by any other sound-producing instrument to which it is applied, since that would change the pitch of the note. It simply intensifies the vibrations a thousand-fold perhaps.

"Now permit me to apply the metallic band to this intensifier, and then have the kindness again to set your feet upon it for an instant only."

Bishop Angelo complied.

The lever being pressed once more, the pipe again gave forth its grave, profound, mysterious note, and in less than a second, the Bishop fell unconscious into the arms of the Master. The latter, however, placing his thumb upon the forehead, between the eyebrows of his prostrate companion, and at the same time uttering some strange words, restored him almost instantly to consciousness.

Pale as death, the Prelate looked around him, as if to ascertain whether he was really alive, but was soothed by the Master's assurance that there was no danger in the experiment when conducted by skillful hands. He was then requested to relate his sensations.

"They are easy to relate," he said, still gasping for breath; "as soon as the sound was produced by the pipe, I felt a series of vibrations running through my whole body, seeming to break my physical structure into minute fragments; aye! almost into dust; that is all I remember; for I lost consciousness immediately."

"Yes, I am aware of the shock produced by the intensifier; but you were in no danger. To show you how far these vibratory powers may go, we will now try an experiment on this piece of granite. It weighs, I should think, about a ton and a half. You can ascertain with this steel hammer whether the stone is solid."

Following the suggestion, Bishop Angelo struck a few heavy blows and then replied :

"Absolutely solid."

"Now place your hand upon the rock, while I sound the different pipes to find the note to which it responds; and tell me when you feel it vibrate."

Placing one hand upon the stone while the lever was being pressed, he suddenly drew back at the sound of the first note, directing an anxious look toward the Master.

The latter smiled benevolently, saying :

"There is no danger, my brother; the vibrations will be directed against the stone."

One metallic band after another was applied to the mass of rock until at last a note of very high pitch was reached. The Bishop now felt the rock beginning to tremble and informed the Master of the fact, who thereupon placed his own hand on the granite. After two or three more notes had been sounded, the trembling of the rock became so marked that the Master said :

"Having now found the number of vibrations to which this mass of rock responds, we will put the intensifier in position, ready to act. To place the instrument at its exact focal distance from the rock is of the utmost importance, as also is the angle of inclination. The intensified vibrations must be projected against the mass with a maximum effect."

Then walking toward the apparatus, he noted the number of the pipe, the sound from which had caused the granite to vibrate. Next, taking from a rack one of many large, thin, metallic, bronze-colored plates, bearing the same number as that inscribed upon the pipe, he placed it in juxtaposition with the intensifying instrument.

"This metallic plate," he explained, "will produce, when struck, the same number of vibrations as that of the pipe in consonance with the molecules of the piece of granite. The vibrations, however, originated by this metallic plate, are much sharper and more destructive in their character; and as our aim is to destroy the rock by a single blow, we must employ the most effective means."

"Destroy this enormous piece of granite by a single blow!" exclaimed Bishop Angelo with amazement.

"Even so," replied his instructor. "The intensifier is now properly adjusted, and the metallic plate being suspended at the correct distance, take this wooden mallet and strike the latter with as powerful a blow as you can deal."

Grasping the ponderous hammer in his strong hands, the Bishop struck with all his force. The blow was terrific; but instead of destroying the plate, as he had expected, it evoked a sharp and deafening ring, followed by a tremendous crash. The enormous granite mass lay scattered on the floor, rent into a thousand pieces.

When Bishop Angelo perceived the astounding effect of his blow, he stood half paralyzed, staring at the heap of crumbled fragments, dazed and wonder-struck.

"This is the result," exclaimed the Master, whose countenance had assumed an expression of deep solemnity, "of intensified destructive vibration."

The Prelate remained standing for fully five minutes without uttering a word, seemingly absorbed in profound thought. Slowly regaining his self-possession he gravely asked, "What is the philosophy or law underlying these startling facts, for facts they are, I must admit."

"Your question is a natural one, and a scientific mind, like yours, cannot rest until it has obtained a

scientific answer. Such answer, however, involves the exposition of an occult truth of the highest importance. The perfect understanding of the law of vibratory motion supplies the key to the performance of so-called miracles, like the spontaneous growth of the mango tree, which I know you have witnessed, and many others equally wonderful. You are aware that in this Universe of the Infinite Father, everything is motion, constant, uninterrupted, eternal motion ; that nothing is or can be at a standstill. The atoms and molecules that compose all bodies are incessantly changing, ever mutually attracting and repelling, unceasingly urged onward and upward, by the Spirit of the Infinite, which permeates all substances, to their most hidden and intimate particles. The members of our Himalayan Brotherhood call this spirit the aura of Parabrahm.

“This universal activity is kept in motion by the agency of vibrations. A very important truth, known to occultists only, is the fact that there are two kinds of vibrations, the constructive and destructive.

“The constructive vibrations are those which tend to build up, to cement together, working out eternally the synthesis of the Universe. Such are primarily the vibrations emanating from the aura of Parabrahm ; also those transmitting the light of the sun. They are life-giving, and productive of all vegetation. They foster molecular changes of a progressive nature, in all matter, inorganic as well as organic, for all spheres, celestial as well as terrestrial ; in fact, they are the agents of what we call Nature. Vibrations proceeding from deep and earnest thought, evolved by a well-balanced, calm and moral brain, are constructive, and positive in their nature, and have therefore a great influence for good. If it be so with the moral brain of the ordinary man,

much more so is it the case with the highly spiritualized brain of the Adept or initiate of the third degree. The voluntary vibrations emanating from his brain are potent almost beyond belief, as you will be taught later.

"The destructive vibrations are those caused by noises, and such disturbing elements as strife, anger, evil passions. They are destructive to life through sickness in the human, animal and vegetable kingdoms; for sickness is nothing but an inharmonious aggregation of molecules, with inverted polarities, establishing unnatural magnetic currents, inducing life forces into wrong channels, where they build up incongruous growths, resulting in fevers or perhaps in death.

"The constructive vibrations lead also to perfect crystalization of pure substances, like the crystals you have seen.

"The destructive vibrations, when intensified, neutralize the constructive force of crystalization by which atoms are kept together; an instance of which you have just witnessed in the experiment with the granite rock, now lying shattered before us."

"This is very wonderful," ejaculated Bishop Angelo. "How much has physical science yet to learn! Still I fail to understand the mysterious growth of the pumpkin seed in the flower-pot on my lawn. There was no producer of vibrations there."

"You are mistaken in your supposition, my dear brother. The brain of man duly trained, duly prepared by the occult means which our Brotherhood exclusively possesses, is the best and most effective vibratory apparatus in existence, both for receiving and generating vibrations, whether constructive or destructive. It is able to project these to any distance within radius of its auric zone with an absolute and positive effect. The

Brahman who performed upon your lawn did so by order of a higher power, with the object of calling your attention to the occult forces of nature. The Master well knew that your intellect would not allow you to ascribe to a petty trick the spontaneous growth of a plant under your own eyes, and under conditions prescribed by yourself. He knew also that you would give your most serious thought to the matter; and it was expected that the ultimate result would be your presence among us; and, (his countenance beaming with an affectionate smile) here you are, dear brother."

"Yes indeed, and great is my joy that it is so."

"Now, follow me to another part of our laboratory," saying which the Master led Bishop Angelo to a room containing electrical apparatus.

"I must now make you acquainted with the constituent parts of the ether of the scientists, which as they assert fills all interplanetary space. This ether we call Akasa. This Akasa contains the essence of all substances in nature. To illustrate my meaning by a few simple experiments; on this stripe of pure zinc I direct a jet of gas which causes it to burn with a green flame, till finally, it is entirely consumed. Where is the metal? What has become of the zinc? It must be somewhere. And such is the fact; its essential parts exist in Akasa. We will now make another experiment."

Proceeding to a small dark room, he turned on a powerful electric current of a certain compound nature.

"Along this copper wire you see copper-colored flames or rather luminosities. This color is due to infinitesimally small particles of copper which the electric current eliminates from the wire. It is, in fact, copper 'in radiation.' Whither does the copper go? To Akasa.

"So Akasa contains the elements, in their essential

form, of all matter and substances in the Universe. If it is possible to decompose matter into its essential parts and thus dissipate it into Akasa, must there not be on the other hand synthetic laws, by the operation of which those elements may be recondensed from Akasa into solid, or manifest forms of matter? In this glass jar, containing a watery solution of a copper salt, you observe an electric current depositing pure metallic copper upon a platinum plate. Is this not an illustration of the synthesis or restoration of matter to the material form of which I spoke?

“If the human brain, (which is the most sensitive and complex of all electric and magnetic batteries) obeying a human will, could direct its currents into Akasa, and draw from this the essential or unmanifested elements of matter; if it could, by condensing, integrate them, and thus bring them into a manifest form;—this I say would be an involutionary process or materialization.

“And, in truth, my dear brother,” enthusiastically exclaimed the Master, “I must state that all the elements contained in Akasa do act in obedience to the duly trained concentrated will of the Adept of the third degree of our Himalayan Brotherhood.

“Furthermore, matter in radiation constitutes the auras of all objects in existence, and this auric matter forms an integral part of Akasa. The auras steadily emanating from plants, minerals and animals constitute Akasa.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE next room into which the Bishop was led was small in comparison with those just visited. It was about twelve feet square, but appeared to be over forty feet high. The walls were of plate glass, coated over with some brown substance or varnish. In the center was a strange looking pyramid, its base octagonal in form, serving as a table to support what seemed to be a quantity of large crystals of various geometrical forms, and of all colors and hues.

"Now look through this small window, my brother, and you will see before you, on yonder mountain, a series of sharp-pointed steel rods eighty-one feet in height. These rods are connected with a main conductor, which, after passing through the basement below, runs upward through the center of this pyramid and at its termination is divided into seven parts, six of which form the points of two inverted triangles, and the seventh the center of a circle circumscribing these triangles, thus forming the very important occult emblem, representing the constructive and eternal forces of nature. This emblem is situated nine feet above the apex of the pyramid."

Bidding his companion follow him, the Master lifted a trap door, uncovering a flight of steps leading into a dark basement. Having descended into this apartment, Bishop Angelo, who was groping his way in the room with difficulty, saw at length a small incandescent electric light, which softly lit the entire basement, and had

been produced by the pressing of a small button in the wall. By the aid of this light the Brahman pointed out to his companion a metallic cable composed of seven strands.

"Each of these strands," said the Buddhist teacher, "is isolated, and connected with a separate underground mineral vein or deposit of metallic ore. The cable runs upward through the floor of the room above to the center of the base supporting the pyramid of crystals. Now let us return to the upper room, where I will give you some further explanation." Extinguishing the light and closing the trap door, he motioned to the Prelate to be seated.

"Before I darken the room," he continued, "and reveal to you one of the most startling experiments of occult force, I beg of you to inspect this pyramid, the beauty of which you will doubtless appreciate. It is the only one of its kind in existence.

"Here you see gathered in their pure and perfect crystal forms, all the metals whose various bases constitute this planet, some of them as yet unknown to the scientific world."

"Can this really be?" ejaculated the Bishop in amazement.

"Yes. This crystal is iridium; that one vanadium; the third, of a brilliant red, is as yet unknown to scientists."

On the last the Bishop was about to lay his hand, when the Master, gently interposing, said:

"Do not mix your aura with that of the crystal. In order that the experiment may succeed, it is necessary to keep the auras of the different metals in absolute purity."

"And have you really here together, all the pure metals of earth in perfect geometric form? I cannot

comprehend how you have been able to obtain crystals of such size. It is almost miraculous."

"All the crystals are not large; we have them of various dimensions as you will perceive by examining the pyramid carefully."

"Some of these crystals, I feel sure, are of great value."

"Undoubtedly they are; but with us their monetary value has absolutely no significance. As you walk round the pyramid do not fail to notice that a thin, metallic wire runs midway around each crystal, forming a kind of belt, while a second wire, of different color and size, connects the two poles or points of the crystals. Notice also that these two systems of wire are inter-connected with each other—belts with belts, and polar wires with polar wires, all running upward through the entire mass of crystals composing the pyramid.

"Now, dear brother, that you have taken note of all these matters, we will close this window, the only one admitting light into the room, and thus we shall be in absolute darkness. While the pupils of our eyes are expanding, to enable them to behold the odic emanations or auras flowing from the crystals I will further explain the meaning of this pyramid and its occult elements.

"At an altitude of nine times nine, or eighty-one feet, above the ridge of the mountain upon which the steel rods are erected, runs a north and south atmospheric electric current of a specific character. It is a current carrying the earth's aura along her atmospheric polar axis. To make this more fully intelligible, I will connect the explanation I am about to give, with certain scientific discoveries, well known to the student of natural philosophy.

“The direct solidarity or inter-dependence between all planets of the same solar system has been established beyond dispute. When the spots in our sun grow large, we know that an electric storm will pass over the face of our earth, taking possession of the telegraph wires, and rendering the working of electric apparatus extremely dangerous. These electric storms will run from the equator to the poles. Following them an aurora borealis, or vivid northern-light will appear in the skies, with luminous shafts shooting upward toward the zenith. Later, the astronomer will observe that the spots on the sun gradually diminish in size, and in time resume their normal appearance. These dark spots, as you well know, are vast caverns or hollow, fireless places, where the sun’s vital energy has died out, as it were. To repair this loss of vitality, he calls upon his satellites for assistance, for more fuel in fact. The electric storm is the first intimation we have of this demand upon our planet for support. The extraordinary electric activity thus awakened increases enormously the auric flow of the earth, which is but an accelerated conversion of solid matter into matter in radiation. This matter in radiation is carried toward the north pole by the electric storm or intensified electric current. Thence it hurries onward to the sun, the direction of its course being often marked by the beautiful rays of the northern light.

“Thus receiving from all his satellites their quota of fuel, the central fires of the sun are rekindled, the empty caverns diminish in size, and the solar life giving heat returns to us with renewed vigor. Now, brother, one of the regular atmospheric currents, steadily carrying, in radiation, matter of our earth to the pole, is flowing over yonder mountain, and a portion of it is intercepted

by the steel rods, and brought at will into this room. By cutting off the connection of the conductor with the earth the regular aura of our planet is focalized upon the six points and center of the occult emblem above the apex of this pyramid.

"You have also noticed that the wire connecting the poles of the metallic crystals are united in seven main wires at the top of the pyramid, and that six of these wires connect with the six points of the triangles, and the seventh with the center of the emblem. A full electric communication is thereby established between the outer polar current of the earth's aura, and the polar current of all the metals composing the pyramid. Both currents focalize in the mystic emblem. Can you now see any aura above the crystals?"

"Here and there I perceive a fewslight luminosities ; nothing very distinct."

— "They will soon appear quite visible, as I already see them plainly ; meanwhile, I will explain the uses of the cable in the basement.

"The location of this temple or monastery was selected, first of all on account of the polar electric current over the mountain, so easily accessible here ; second, on account of ore beds of the seven principal mother metals of the earth found in this vicinity. Strands of the cable have been conducted to each of these metallic deposits, and bring to our pyramid seven currents which, combined, form in its integrity, the natural magnetic current of the earth. These magnetic mineral currents are the negative currents of the planet, and they help to develop the several auras or vital emanations, while the electric or polar currents are positive, and transport to their natural destination the auric emanations developed by the earth's magnetism.

"When under favorable vibratory conditions, as for instance when metallic copper was deposited upon the platinum plate, as seen in the other room, the electric current may also re-convert matter in radiation into solid matter. This, my brother, is all the explanation needed to understand the exceedingly interesting experiment in occultism which we are now about to perform; look at the pyramid, and see whether you can distinguish more clearly the auric zones of the different metals."

"I do indeed; I see them quite distinctly," replied the Bishop. "They are beautiful in the extreme in their variety of colors and hues. The zones of some, however, extend much farther than those of others. The polar flames are perfectly distinguishable, and differ in color from the luminous radiations around the belts."

"I am glad that the auras appear plain to you, with their varied colors and delicate hues. Watch them now, and mark whither they are directed."

"I notice that some auras interblend very readily, while others keep apart, but all ascend toward the triangles, and about it form a cloud of many hues, which is gradually growing denser as the auric emanations successively reach it. The cloud is in a state of activity, as if interior attractions and repulsions were at work."

"Just so, brother; and now I shall connect the emblem with the seven strands of the wire cable by turning this lever. Remember that before the magnetic current of the earth, conveyed by the cable, can reach the triangles, it must pass through the wire belts of all the crystals. Now, watch."

Bishop Angelo perceived that all the belt currents became highly intensified, forming near the mystic triangle a second luminous cloud, pulsating as in the throes of labor. It was a beautiful sight. Breathless with ex-

pectation, he observed with intense interest the progress of the experiment.

"That cloud," said the Master, "is the mother, womb, and mineral protoplasm, all in one. I now turn on the electric current of the mountain, which will pass first through the polar wires of the metals. Observe the result."

The whole pyramid of crystals became immediately enwrapped in multi-colored flames, and the cloud enveloping the mystic emblem, irresistibly attracting the one below, was vividly illuminated. Brighter and brighter grew the center, until at last an intensely luminous speck was formed.

"That," said the Master with great solemnity, "is the nucleus of a new world. It is a comet; an infinitesimal one, it is true, but a complete comet nevertheless. Brother, thus worlds are formed."

The Bishop seemed as one transfixed.

"We will now try whether we can succeed in transforming one of these auric clouds, this matter in radiation into solid matter; in fact, solidify the comet; aye! make a planet of it! Take this polished silver tray, and place it just above the pyramid, under the mystic emblem where you will find a support for it.

"We will now condense our comet into meteoric dust, for thus are formed the meteors daily falling upon our earth. While connecting the polar wires of this pyramid with a powerful battery of static electricity, I shall also connect the belt wires with an equally powerful electro-magnetic machine. Now observe."

Two levers being simultaneously pressed, a blinding flash shot through the heart of the cloud followed by absolute darkness.

Opening the window, the Master said :

"We will now see whether we have succeeded in obtaining meteoric dust."

As soon as the Bishop had recovered his equipoise, and his eyes had become accustomed to the light, he hastened to bring the silver tray to his instructor, and lo ! upon it lay small particles of dust.

"Proceed with care in gathering the dust, as we must test it by the microscope, and by acids, to assure ourselves that it is really meteoric."

Deep emotion was depicted on Angelo's features. He realized that he had assisted at an occult experiment of the most momentous significance. In the presence of the Master he felt as a child, and followed him mechanically to the room where the microscopes were kept. Submitting the dust carefully to optical and chemical tests, he was compelled to pronounce it of genuine meteoric origin.

"Now, dear brother," said the Master with great solemnity, "retire to your room and meditate, for it has been proved to you that 'as it is above, so it is below, as is the Macrocosm, so is the Microcosm.'"

Two days later, the Master called at the Prelate's room, and bade him prepare to receive the second degree, which was to be conferred upon him at high noon. He thus admonished him :

"Perform thy ablutions thoroughly, and surround thyself with as much aura of the Spirit of the Infinite, as thou canst attract by earnest prayer and intense aspiration. I will call for thee at the proper time."

After making his ablutions, Bishop Angelo fell on his knees, and offered up to his Maker as heartfelt a thanksgiving, prayer, and adoration as man can utter.

"I thank Thee, O Heavenly Father, that Thou hast permitted thy humble servant to receive the truth con-

cerning the handiwork of thy Universe ; to understand the wise laws by which it is governed, and the means Thou hast placed within the reach of every human being, to draw nearer and nearer to Thee ; I thank Thee my Heavenly Master, that Thou hast brought me to the knowledge of thy masters here on earth, to whom thou hast confided the mysteries of thy Holy Truth, that they may unfold them to humanity as it becomes worthy to receive them. Grant my prayer, O Omnipotent Spirit ! Infuse into me those high and noble qualities that will enable me to follow their footsteps on their upward path to Thee ! Give me power to suppress the bad and develop the good, ever ascending, until finally I return to Thee ! I glorify Thee, O my Lord ! Henceforth my life shall be consecrated to thy service."

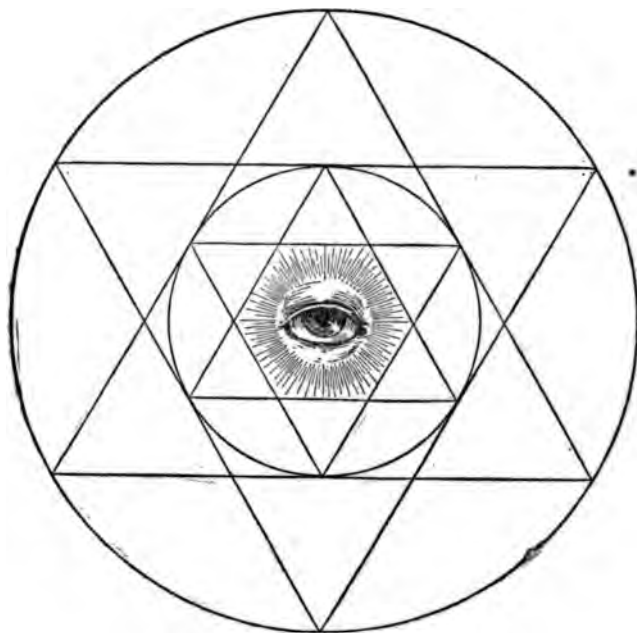
Further devotions were interrupted by the arrival of the Master, who summoned him to the hall of assembly.

Following his guide Bishop Angelo entered the spacious hall, and found convened therein twenty-four brethren arrayed in white robes, a band of blue along the edges of which distinguished them from others. The Master conducted his candidate to a chair placed midway between the center and the end of the hall, taking a position by his side.

The first thing observed by the Bishop was a large circle on the floor, twelve feet in diameter, and including two inscribed triangles, their six points lying in the circumference. From the center of the circle another interior and much smaller one was drawn tangent to the sides of the inscribed triangles within.

Within this smaller circle, two similar triangles were inscribed.

While thus occupied, strains of most perfect melody fell softly from some invisible instrument upon the



**GEOMETRICAL LINES FOLLOWED BY THE ODIC FORCES IN NATURE
IN THE PROCESS OF MATERIALIZATION.**

Bishop's ear ; and now the brethren marched toward the center of the hall, each holding in his hand a staff surmounted by a golden cross. Slowly they arranged themselves in groups of six on the mystic figure—the first on the circumference at the points of the triangles ; the second on the same circumference, half way between them ; the third at the points at which the sides of the large triangles intersected each other, and the last, on the six points of the small triangles. When thus in position the brethren joined hands.

A voice was then heard :

“ Let the hall be darkened,” and instantly darkness prevailed.

“ Let the signal be given to the brethren who are not with us in the body that the candidate for initiation is duly prepared, and that we await their presence.”

For some minutes, no sound was heard but the strains of the mysterious music.

“ Has the order been given ? ” inquired the Master.

“ It has,” replied the twenty-four brethren in unison.

“ Let us then offer a silent supplication to the Infinite Father, asking him to bestow upon the candidate his measure of the Divine aura.”

After an interval, passed in silent prayer, sweet musical sounds, like chimes of silver bells, were heard, apparently proceeding from a point above the centre of the mystic circle. Only for a brief half minute they lasted. As they died away, a voice was heard saying :

“ Brethren of the second degree are approaching in their astral bodies, to assist in the initiation of the candidate.”

“ Watch the centre of the circle ! ” whispered the Master to the Bishop.

Around the outer edge of the large circle, a circum-

ference of auric flames appeared ; then the inner circle became faintly illuminated, these luminous rings, as they grew brighter, gradually converging toward the center of the mystic figure. Presently an auric cloud was seen to form rapidly, increasing in density, and growing in height. Pulsation was soon perceptible ; streaks of light appeared, which condensed into two luminous points, one red, near the center of the cloud ; the other a brilliant white, at the upper extremity. A few minutes later the cloud took the form of a human being, slowly solidifying, and lo ! in exactly three times three, or nine minutes time, there, in the center of the circle, stood a noble Brahman with figure erect, in his astral body. Stepping outside the circle, he slowly moved to his customary seat. Eight materializations had followed each other in a short space of time, when a ninth was announced by a peculiar sound of the astral bells, sweeter, more heavenly than before. The Master again whispered, and now with greater solemnity, in the Bishop's ear :

“The Grand Master of the second degree is approaching.”

Sweeter and more sweet sounded the notes of the astral bells, while the luminous bodies emanating from the magic circle became more intense and more purely white. Presently a bright mist appeared to hover over the center of the circle, interspersed with a filagree of golden streaks. Almost too quickly for human eye to mark the transformation, in its place stood the magnificent form of a European, whose countenance beamed with superior intelligence and benevolence.

Bishop Angelo recognized him immediately as a fellow student in one of the leading universities of Europe. He knew him, moreover, to be at the head of a cele-

brated institution of learning which possessed the finest astronomical observatory of the age.

With dignified mien, the Grand Master proceeded to his seat on an elevated dais, and as two of the initiates, present only in their astral bodies, took their places beside him, again the hall was radiant with light.

The ceremonies opened with music and invocations, chanted in a peculiar rhythmic measure. These ended, his late instructor conducted the candidate to the Grand Master, who welcomed him as a member of the Himalayan Brotherhood, and as a former college acquaintance. After this kindly greeting, he alluded to the indoctrination which the candidate had lately received, through the various demonstrations exhibited in the scientific laboratories.

"You have there learned," said the Grand Master, "three great lessons in truth; the first, that every thing in the Universe is in motion, and that this motion is the result of vibrations. Second, that every substance in existence is the possessor of an aura, which is simply the matter of the substance itself in radiation; that this aura becomes a part of Akasa, filling all inter-planetary space. Third, that vibratory motion or force, properly applied to this Akasa, can condense its elements into a solid or manifest form. Indeed, you have just witnessed the materialization of the bodies of several of the brethren now present, and that of my own body effected under nearly similar conditions.

"In the second degree, where the power of materialization has not yet been independently acquired, it is necessary that the brethren assisting the candidate should be in perfect harmony, to insure immediate success. Thus working in perfect unison, emitting powerful, homogeneous, constructive vibrations from their

brains, they can summon into their presence in a comparatively short time, a healthy and well formed human being. One skeptic, projecting his destructive vibrations upon the delicate auric structure, is often sufficient to prevent materialization."

At this point, astral bells were heard ringing in all parts of the hall, but more particularly over the Grand Master's head.

"I am summoned," he said, "to return to my mundane life, in order to continue observations on the planet Jupiter, in which changes of great magnitude are taking place.

"The second degree teaches the initiate the laws by which he may appear at will in his astral body, wherever he may wish, and also make himself visible and invisible. To the Master who has already indoctrined you in the science of occultism, I delegate the task of instructing you in these laws. It often requires long practice in the cultivation of the will power, (for there is a wide difference between simple volition and will) and great care and prudence before we are able to accomplish this grand consummation with readiness and safety. It is also necessary to gain a complete knowledge and understanding of the influences, times and directions of planetary, electric and magnetic currents, for these are in fact the routes along which our astral bodies travel.

"Let the Brother of the West bring the insignia of the second degree."

Thereupon one of the brethren approached with a white robe, trimmed with blue, and a staff of bamboo cane, surmounted by a golden cross. Taking them from the hands of the assistant, the Grand Master robed Bishop Angelo with the vestment of the order, saying:

“The white robe signifies purity; purity of life, purity of action, and purity of thought. The blue borders indicate the heavenly aspirations, which should unceasingly control thee. They denote also, that a still higher step has to be gained in thine upward march, to win the spotless robe of white. Next I present thee with this golden cross, the emblem of the physical man. Its vertical bar represents man’s polar axis, along which the main life forces travel; while the horizontal one signifies and indicates the region of dia-magnetism. At the intersection of the two planes in the corporeal form of man dwells his animal soul. The four points of the cross represent his senses and its center the region in which all sensual forces originate. This cross I present to thee as a token of warning against domination of the senses. Keep it ever before thee. The emblem is placed upon a staff, because on it thou must lean in all thy walks of life; whithersoever thou goest, it is to be with thee. Thus thou hast an ever present reminder of the ceaseless battle against the allurements of the senses. These, my brother, are the insignia we bestow upon the neophyte, when taking the second degree in occultism.

“Now, let all the brethren approach. Draw this couch into the mystic circle.”

A settee of bamboo was placed in the centre of the circle. The Grand Master descended from the platform and approaching the couch, said: “Let the initiate lie down.”

The Bishop obeyed.

He then moved toward the head of the initiate, put one hand upon it, and the other upon the region of the solar plexus, and all the brethren took their places in the magic circle, as when expecting the aërial visitors.

“You will doubtless be glad to know what is occur-

ring in your Bishopric in Simla," the Grand Master said. "Wish then with a powerful concentration of your will-power to go thither, to see your coadjutor, and make yourself visible to him; wish moreover to be able to address him in an audible voice, and to say what you desire; and, finally resolve most firmly to return hither to your body within twenty minutes; for presently I must leave you."

"Now brethren, join hands and let your will strengthen the will of the initiate."

In a moment Bishop Angelo became apparently unconscious.

At the end of the allotted time, the Bishop opened his eyes, and looked around him with bewilderment and assumed an upright position.

"Brother, did you see your coadjutor?" asked the Grand Master.

"I saw him, and he expressed his delight at my return, saying that a matter of great importance awaited me. He showed me a letter from the Cardinal Secretary to the Pope, stating that his Holiness, in recognition of the important services which I had rendered to the Church in India, had appointed me Archbishop of Simla, with residence at the City of Liège in Belgium. The letter further ordered that I should intrust the affairs of the diocese to my coadjutor, and proceed at once to Europe."

"I am aware that such a letter is awaiting you," said the Grand Master. "Return to your Bishopric as soon as you have obtained an audience from the Supreme Master presiding over the third degree of our Order; for him, you must see before leaving the monastery."

Again the astral bells were heard. The Grand Master, with a few words of congratulation and encouragement, delivered the initiate into the care of his instructor,

and at a sign from him all heads were bowed toward the ground. When the brethren again looked up, their commander had disappeared as mysteriously as he had arrived.

The next evening, Bishop Angelo was ordered to proceed to the hall of the third degree. The swift beatings of his heart told him of the emotion which he tried in vain to control. Arriving in the ante-room, he was asked to be seated, until he should be summoned into the presence of the Supreme Master. Meanwhile, an inscription above the doors of the main hall attracted his attention. It was written in Latin and read: "*Memento homo quia Deus es, et in Deum reverteris.*" The sublimity of this motto filled his soul with divine aspirations.

After an interval of fifteen minutes, which he passed in earnest supplication to the Infinite Father, the doors of the main hall were thrown open, and the Bishop was invited to enter. Led by his instructor to the foot of the platform, upon which was seated the Supreme Master surrounded by his Adepts, he tried in vain to distinguish the features of the superior beings into whose presence he had at length been ushered. The aura surrounding them was so bright that it momentarily dazzled him, for they appeared like shining suns. The Supreme Master was radiant with light.

"Look up and behold," said his instructor.

At last the Bishop, slowly lifting his eyes, beheld a being so bright, so godlike of aspect, so transcendent in divine expression, that involuntarily he knelt before him.

The Supreme Master commencing his instructions at once said: "My brother, it is in part the province of the third degree to teach the candidate how effectually

to control matter in any of its states or stages ; to render it visible or invisible at will ; in fact, to force matter to obey spirit at all times and under all circumstances. This is done by means of vibrations created by the brain of the Adept, and directed by his powerful will. These vibrations thou wilt be taught to create and direct, as time proceeds and thy will grows stronger. The growth and evolution of the human will is a matter of paramount importance in occultism and very little understood by man. When man has overcome his passions and subdued his moral weaknesses, has become the absolute master of self, and has reached the point where he can live in uninterrupted harmony with his highest ideal, then, and then only, commences the formation of the real occult Will whose vibrations control the imponderable forces of the Universe in a greater or less degree, in direct ratio to its own state of evolution and divine growth. This growth and power of the occult Will is limitless, as is Parabrahm himself.

“ The third degree meets here every third moon when the heavenly bodies assume favorable aspects. Of this thou shalt be notified at the proper time. Thou mayest then meet with us in astral body, for we are aware that thy stay in India is drawing to a close. Meanwhile, dear brother, wherever thou art, unceasingly endeavor to spiritualize thy life. Strive always after higher inspiration ; merge thyself utterly in the aura of Parabrahm, and truths more sublime, more celestial, will ever be unfolded unto thee. Know thou, that the Adept or initiate of the third degree of our Brotherhood, wearing the robe of pure white, is indeed a Master. He walks with head erect on the true path leading upward to Parabrahm. No weaknesses assail him ; no by-ways, however tempting, attract his attention. Immersed in divine aura,

and living in affinity with Parabrahm, the infinite truths of the Universe flow naturally unto him, as the sunshine penetrates the clear crystal windows of a palace, and illuminates all its interior chambers. The Master of the third degree is the intermediate between Parabrahm or God and his creature, man. Humanizing, so to say, the Divine Spirit or influx, by absorbing it in his own brain, and thence projecting it through his almost unlimited auric zone into the intellectual and spiritual atmosphere of earth, he thus brings it within the reach of man, who can partake of it at will, if his life is pure enough, his aspirations lofty and powerful enough, to be in affinity with that Divine Spirit or influx. Now brethren, approach ! ”

At this command all the Adepts surrounded Bishop Angelo, and raising their eyes at the same time toward heaven, commenced uttering a prayer in tones so low yet harmonious, that their voices resembled rather a sweet soft murmur than an invocation uttered in words. The Sublime Grand Master, lifting also his eyes heavenward, and with hands extended toward Brother Angelo, besought, in fervid words, the Spirit of Parabraham to descend upon the candidate. Soon were perceived rays of brilliant white coming from above and centering upon the head of the Bishop. Steadily they grew in brightness, until all present, dazzled by the supernatural vision, sank prostrate on the floor, the Grand Master alone remaining upright. Then were heard strains of sublimest melody, in those softly subdued tremolos which awaken spiritual consciousness. The Bishop felt as though transfigured. The material Universe disappeared from sight, and a world of dazzling brightness opened before him. Soon a divine influx, quickening intensely his spiritual nature, permeated his entire being, so that

he seemed to have become almost a part of Divinity itself. So lofty, powerful, and positive were his spiritual possessions, thoughts, and aspirations, that he realized having entered a new world, the world of causes, and for the moment at least lived in the celestial realms of a super-sensuous existence. He had become endowed with the priceless gift of apprehending laws and principles eternal.

CHAPTER VII.

How beautiful she was, with large, soft, blue eyes, gazing into space ! Her golden locks loosely but gracefully knotted, fell in wavelets upon her shoulders. Her pale features, child-like in their innocence, were encircled with a halo of spirituality, and under the velvet-like skin, the veins pulsated with pure and healthy blood. Her simple robe, of delicate gray-tint, fastened around the waist by a plain leathern belt, fell in simple yet artistic folds, revealing in graceful outline the perfect symmetry of her form.

Near by, a lady of queenly aspect, and a gentleman of stately presence and aristocratic mien were gazing at the young girl, as on one whom they loved. Presently the lady said :

“There she is, Monseigneur, absorbed again in one of those reveries in which she appears to be away from earth. If we speak to her she will not hear us ; her soul, in these moments of abstraction, seems as if it had left her body to roam elsewhere upon some unknown and lofty errand in space. The heavenly expression of her face shows that her spirit is far away, and that her thoughts are as those of an angel.”

“This is strange,” answered the Archbishop, with a sigh. “I thought, Countess, that the love you bear to that child made you sometimes exaggerate her peculiarities ; but I can see now that there is really something strange and abnormal in your pupil, and that her case

deserves close and intelligent study." And he whispered to himself,—“I must study her.”

“Yes, Monseigneur, Olga is a strange child, and I love her dearly, a little for her oddities, perhaps, but much more for her purity of soul, her simplicity of character, truthfulness of spirit and superiority of mind. She is as noble a child as ever came to earth.”

“And has she no relatives here?” inquired the Archbishop.

“No. Her father, an American gentleman, Livingston by name, was travelling with his wife and child, through Europe. Upon the recommendation of the American Minister at Brussels, two years ago, he intrusted his child to me, saying that he knew I would care for her as faithfully as would her mother. Last year, while at Rome, the mother was attacked by malarial fever and died. The father immediately came to see his child, and the meeting was heartrending in the extreme. He left her with me, saying that from what he had heard and from what Olga had told him, he did not believe she could find anywhere better care, sympathy, or love. So Mr. Livingston departed for America; leaving his dearest and only treasure in my charge.”

“She is the living incarnation of a soul in heaven,” said Monseigneur, gazing admiringly at Olga, who was still standing in the same posture and still gazing wistfully into space. Meanwhile a little color had tinged her cheeks and she was breathing more rapidly.

“The immortal spirit,” he continued, “seems to shine through her. What an interesting child she is!”

“If Monseigneur will permit,” rejoined the lady, “we will retire into this vine-covered arbor.”

Madame de Bellevue and the Archbishop moved slowly toward the spot indicated, seated themselves upon a

rustic bench, and awaited with anxious interest the result of Olga's abstraction.

After a few moments, the girl's eyelids slowly moved, and she looked searchingly around, as if to see whether she had been observed. At length she uttered a long, deep sigh, and casting a farewell salute at some invisible object, ran like a startled fawn to the recreation hall, where the young ladies of the seminary were chatting before retiring for the night.

"Do you really think, Countess," asked the Monseigneur with evident interest "that Olga, when thus abstracted, sees visions?"

"I could never discover whether she does or not; she is very reticent about these reveries; afraid, I suppose, lest she be considered a dreamer and visionary. The salute she threw into space, makes me for the first time believe that she really has visions when so entranced."

"We must study that child thoroughly, Countess; she may prove a very interesting psychological subject."

Thus conversing, they proceeded to the private dwelling of Madame de Bellevue, directing their steps toward the cosy and well appointed library.

"Monseigneur," said the lady, "with your permission, tea will be served in the library. I always like to be with my books, whenever I have to reason upon intellectual matters."

"Certainly, Countess, certainly; the idea itself is a very suggestive one."

Madame Adelaide, Countess de Bellevue, was a portly lady of about sixty summers. Her features were those of the old noblesse, who understood that they too had obligations and duties to fulfill, in return for the privileges they enjoyed. On them was stamped an air of dignity, coupled with superior intelligence, and a sense

of honor and purity, while in her large, dark eyes the most striking expression was that of womanly affection and benevolence. On either side of her noble forehead a puff of snow-white hair projected, and her brow was covered with a triangular strip of fine black lace *à la* Marie Stuart. She wore a heavy, black-silk dress and upon her shoulders a shawl of delicate lace.

The Countess was a French exile ; her husband a rich and aristocratic nobleman, had been arrested by order of Robespierre during the Revolution, found guilty of conspiring against the Republic, and sentenced to death by the guillotine, all within forty-eight hours.

Madame de Bellevue was saved through the devotion and tender attachment of her nurse, who prevailed upon her to disguise herself as a peasant, and fly, under the escort of the nurse's husband, to the Belgian frontier.

The young Countess, dressed as a peasant, escaped to Belgium, and passed the frontier after a seven days' wearisome and perilous journey, performed for the most part by night.

The Countess had a little money, sufficient to take her to the city of Liège, where lived her former tutor, now seventy years of age, to whom she could appeal with perfect confidence for guidance and protection.

An accomplished lady, proficient in all branches of feminine culture, she soon gathered around her a number of pupils, to whom she taught embroidery, drawing, painting, music, elocution, and other accomplishments. After two years thus passed in the city, the leading families of Liège requested her to open a *pensionat* for their daughters, and to take entire charge of their education. The Countess finally consented, and in less than five years, her seminary had become the most prominent in Belgium. She not only gave technical instruction to

her pupils, but by precept and example fitted them to adorn the circles of fashionable society. Every Wednesday, a reception was held in her parlors, at which a number of young ladies were deputed to receive and entertain the guests, to attend to all details, to see that nothing was wanting which might contribute to the enjoyment of the evening.

Another duty enjoined on her pupils, and one about which Madame de Bellevue was very particular, was the distribution among the city poor, of the remnants of their meals, the good Countess taking care that there should always be a surplus. Each afternoon, the outer door of the seminary was thrown open, and as the poor entered with their tin pails, the young ladies, with smiles and encouraging words, returned them well filled with substantial food. Remembering her own sad experience in life, the Countess impressed upon them the claims of charity, as the first of all Christian virtues.

At the time of our narrative, the seminary situated in the handsomest quarter of Liège, with large grounds attached, was attended by the children of the best families of Belgium and Holland, and even from Germany and France. Apart from her rank, superior attainments and high qualities of mind gained for the Countess the veneration and esteem of all with whom she was on terms of intimacy. Such was the lady in whose care Mr. Livingston had placed his dearest and only child, Olga.

An American by birth, and thoroughly imbued with American methods, systems, and ideas, before taking leave of the Countess Mr. Livingston had begged of her to give his child a practical education, and to prepare her, so far as possible, for the battle of life in the western world.

Madame de Bellevue astonished Mr. Livingston by the

following answer, which, however, not only satisfied but delighted him.

"The American idea of educating women, I consider entirely wrong," she said. "The growing tendency to prepare young ladies for professions which have so far been entirely allotted to men, must finally have a disastrous effect upon society. It is not to be disputed, however, that a woman whom chance throws upon her own resources, finds it more difficult every day to make an honorable livelihood; nor do we deny that, if she has been duly prepared by a liberal education, she can the more readily find employment in a field exclusively occupied hitherto by men, because her services can be obtained at a lower rate of remuneration. A woman as an attorney-at-law or as a civil engineer is an anomaly. Where is the man who, having secured an independent position in life, and wishing to marry and create a home, will take to his heart an attorney-at-law or a civil engineer as the woman to be the mother of his children?"

"We consider the mission of woman far superior to that which the drift of modern American ideas would ascribe to her. In fact, we deem the rôle she is intended to play in life more important than that of man. Man will study the sciences, discover the laws governing matter, apply those laws to his worldly welfare, and create wealth; he will build gigantic railroads, establish vast steamship lines, linking far away continents together; put in operation innumerable industries, all centering toward his personal comfort. It must, however, be conceded that all these pursuits, absorbing man's entire activity, are exclusively material, administering to the wants and needs of the body only, leaving in utter oblivion and neglect the spiritual and nobler side of his nature. Woman's province and destiny it is to stand by

the side of man as a faithful watcher, a loving guardian, a spiritual companion, the salutary influence of whose presence will silently and constantly remind him of a sphere of activities higher than those of the material plane upon which his daily avocation compels him to live. After a busy day spent in pursuits and calculations intended to increase his worldly possessions, pursuits and calculations often in conflict with the higher principles of ethics, when returning home at night, the husband and father should be made to feel that he is entering a temple at whose outer door all business cares should be laid aside, a temple whose very atmosphere is pure and elevating, the presence of whose presiding goddess is a constant incentive to higher and nobler thoughts, and whose affection is worthy of all human effort and sacrifice. In such a home, man must needs regain through this higher train of sentiment more than he loses daily through the debasing influences inseparable from a modern business career. In the presence of such a wife, he feels a better man. She is a living appeal to the higher side of his nature. The purity of her soul, the superiority of her mind are constant incentives to nobler mental activities.

“Such a wife is the guardian angel of man ; God’s own guardian against the wickedness of the world ; and when mature age shall have calmed his passions ; when at length his striving for worldly possessions shall come to an end, either through their superabundance or through a more just appreciation of their real value, then the household divinity, wife and mother, will have the satisfaction of seeing her spiritualizing mission bear fruit, and as a recompense for her noble endeavors, she may now, with the one she has aided, walk hand in hand, with

eyes uplifted, confident and hopeful, until the golden gates shall open for both.

"This we consider the true mission of woman upon earth, and all the efforts of our seminary are to prepare young ladies for such activities of life as we have indicated. Absolute purity of soul, high spiritual mindedness, deep religious feelings, intellectual attainments, æsthetic and artistic development, refinement of manners, and proficiency in the accomplishments that are so much appreciated in good society to-day ; these it is our aim to inculcate. We are certain that a young lady educated by us, and possessing the attributes just enumerated will surely find a station in harmony with her attainments. Any gentleman wishing to settle seriously in life would certainly marry such a one in preference to a female attorney-at-law or a civil engineer.

"This modern American system of instilling into young ladies the idea that they are as good as men, that they should prepare to fill the same professions as are occupied by men ; that they have as much right as men to anything and everything that the world contains, has the effect of defeminizing them. They become positive, argumentative, self-assertive, and really act as men in their ways, especially in those which are inferior. The result is fewer marriages and more divorces. It is a satisfaction to know, if adversity should chance to overtake one of our pupils in after life, she will be prepared to meet it through the moral and intellectual resources which our educational system has placed at her disposal."

After this discourse, Mr. Livingston was fully convinced that the education given to the young ladies of Madame de Bellevue's seminary was of the highest ; that he had undoubtedly selected for his daughter as

good a home as could be found ; and knowing this, he took his departure for America with less reluctance.

"How long has Miss Olga been with you, Countess ?" asked the Archbishop continuing the conversation.

"About a year and a half, Monseigneur."

"Has she had these reveries very long ?"

"No; they commenced, as far as I have observed, about three months after her father bade her good-by. These spells occur about once a week. They have grown, however, more intense, and to-day, as you have observed, her abstraction amounts almost to a trance."

"Has she any male instructor who appears interested in her ?"

"There are two very aged professors for special branches, drawing and music."

"Is there anybody else of the male sex in your institution with whom Miss Livingston comes in contact ?"

"No, except perhaps, my protégé, the young violinist, who has just returned from Brussels, the laureate of the Conservatory. He plays before the young ladies occasionally. You know young Trouvère ?"

"I have heard a vague report about a musical genius whom you had adopted and were kindly educating ; and you say he has just returned with honors from the Conservatory ?"

"He has, Monseigneur."

"Please tell me more about him."

The Countess related the episodes of his career to the Archbishop.

Some fifteen years before, at the seminary of Countess de Bellevue, twenty or thirty people were assembled before the outer door of the kitchen yard, each one carrying a small tin pail. The door opened, and the young ladies taking their vessels from a few of the applicants,

turned to the kitchen, and filling them to the brim, returned them to the owners with a kindly smile and a cheering word. All were served in turn and went their way, except a boy about twelve years old, who was a favorite, and who lingered until the last. When all were gone he was invited into the kitchen.

"Well, Trouvére," (for such was his name) said Victoire de Fays, one of the young ladies who had taken a great fancy to the little fellow, "how are you to-day? I hope you are well, in good trim, and can give us a nice little solo on your harmonica; something new, you know, as we have heard the "Brabançonne" many times; if you do so we will fill your little pail brim full with cakes and sweetmeats."

The little fellow appeared to think deeply for a few minutes, hardly noticing the promised reward, and shyly made answer:

"I know a new piece, but it is so strange, so unlike the other tunes, that I am afraid you will not like it."

"Well, let us hear it," said Isabelle Servais, a merry flaxen-haired beauty; "if we do not like it we will tell you."

"Yes, yes," said they all in chorus, "play it for us, Trouvére."

Seating himself and raising to his mouth a large harmonica, a present from the ladies, the lad commenced to play. Instantly the attention of his audience was riveted, for such strange tones and combinations they had never heard before. The instrument gave forth notes of wailing and pent-up sorrow, anon bursting forth into sobs and lamentations. The little musician appeared to be entirely absorbed in the melody. Such wierd, wild notes they had never heard, and for the moment they forgot their school duties, not even notic-

ing the entrance of "bonne maman" as they called the Countess de Bellevue, who now appeared on the scene to find out the cause of their delay. She was at once entranced herself by the strange music. Trouvére stopped, however, and it was only then that the young ladies noticed the presence of the Countess and with contrite air, asked pardon as they returned to their respective class-rooms. But Victoire de Fays and Isabelle Servais remained with the Countess, and asked her if she could do nothing to further the musical education of the talented child.

"Come to my room," she answered, "and we will talk the matter over."

When in her chamber and seated, she beckoned to Trouvére and taking him affectionately by the hand, asked whether he would like to become an artist, a musician. The boy fell on his knees before the kind-hearted lady and, raising his clasped hands, cried out with tears in his eyes, "A violin, a violin, bonne maman."

The Countess could not help laughing at this enthusiastic outburst of the embryo artist, and replied: "Well, well, my little son, you shall have a violin. But tell me where did you learn the strange tune you were playing in the kitchen?"

The child became embarrassed and bowed his head without answering.

"Tell me, Trouvére, I wish to know."

For a moment the lad remained twisting his cap between his fingers, but being urged by his patroness, said that he had had a dream, or at least thought it was a dream, though everything was as plain to him as if he had been awake. He seemed to be in a strange country, in the midst of high mountains. He saw a village with its people living in tents of skin. He saw them go into

a cave, and gather around a pile of stones upon which a small fire was burning. As every one placed on it a stick of wood, it blazed anew. The scent given forth by the burning wood was very strong and sweet. The whole ceremony was presided over by a stately woman or Queen, holding a staff in her hand. Soon he heard strange music, at the strains of which the people began to dance around the fire. They also took up the burning brands, waving them strangely in the air. Though many other things occurred, he did not notice them, so absorbed was he in the music, which had impressed him so much, that ever since he had tried to play it on his harmonica, and thought that what they had heard was somewhat like it. The Countess kissed the little fellow, and dismissed him.

When he had gone, the lady pondered over the matter and came to the conclusion that Trouvère should have an opportunity to cultivate his musical talent. She thought as he was the pet of all the young ladies of the seminary, he might as well be educated with them, for he was but twelve years old, and perfectly innocent and well behaved. So the next morning she sent her gardener to inquire after the parents of the little fellow, with a view to making arrangements with them. He returned with the information that Trouvère had no parents; that he lived with a woman, in whose care he had been placed by another woman who, it was said, brought him from Brussels to Liège; that the boy was at the time very well dressed; in a word that it was a mystery, which would probably never be cleared up, as the woman who brought him from Brussels was dead, or so at least it was reported. At this unexpected news the Countess decided to adopt the boy at once. She herself went to see the person with whom he resided,

gave her some money, and assured her that the ladies under her charge would see to her wants.

When Trouvère was installed in the seminary, the Countess had him neatly dressed, and brought to her rooms. She was much impressed by his appearance ; his mien, though child-like, showed breeding and refinement ; his figure was erect, and his bearing aristocratic ; his skin was of a southern hue, and his complexion dark ; his eyes were black and dreamily soft, set off with arching, well-defined eye-brows. The Countess said that he looked like the son of some southern gentleman, proud, but distinguished and refined. She had a room prepared for him adjoining her own apartments. He attended the class-rooms with the young ladies of his age, always behaved most genteelly, and proved a most apt and attentive pupil.

The teacher of music had been instructed to take Trouvère into his class, and from that quarter also great progress was reported. For several years the boy remained at the seminary, intermingling freely with the young ladies, during class hours at least, for in moments of recreation he always went to his room to practice on the violin purchased for him by the Countess. The very soul of the boy was absorbed in his music. Every spare minute was given to practice, and he soon became a fair instrumentalist. His classical studies were also very satisfactory ; but he loved the poets best.

Slowly he developed into a handsome young man, and it was no longer proper for him to mingle with the young ladies. So the Countess ordered her professors to give him private lessons in her own rooms, and for two years he studied unremittingly. He was now seventeen, and his benefactress thought it time to send him

to the Conservatory of Music at Brussels, to finish his education and fit him for his profession.

It was with much hesitation and misgiving that the good lady decided to send the inexperienced youth into a large city. Thus far he had never seen any society but that which the seminary afforded. His soul was as pure as crystal; all his aspirations were lofty; he was deeply religious, with an unbounded love and adoration for the Infinite Maker of all. But would he come forth unsullied from the temptations of a great metropolis?

Finally Madame de Bellevue wrote to a lady friend, who lived in that city, and told her about Trouvère. This lady was in good circumstances, a widow and childless, and herself a great lover of music. The Countess thought that, while Trouvère would be good company for her, he would also be safe in her hands. The lady answered that she would be very happy to receive the young man, would give him room and board gratuitously, and thus contribute her mite toward bringing this genius before the world.

The Countess was delighted, and after having arranged all matters with Trouvère, herself accompanied him to Brussels. There she made all arrangements with the professors of the Conservatory, paid all the bills, saw Trouvère installed in the household of her friend, and bidding him an affectionate farewell, returned to Liège, not without shedding tears at the idea of leaving behind her one to whom she was tenderly attached, and who was so worthy of her motherly affection.

A few weeks before the Countess and the Archbishop met in the library of the seminary, Madame de Bellevue had received a letter from Trouvère, stating that he had passed so excellent an examination in every branch of music that he had won the prize of honor at the Con-

servatory, which would be bestowed upon him at the end of the week. He besought the good Countess to be present if possible at the ceremony, especially as the King might attend, for the prize was his own endowment.

"I certainly attach," he said in his letter, "much value to the gold medal which will be put upon my breast, perhaps by the King himself; but far more that you, my noble benefactress, should witness the honor conferred on me, one which I owe to your protection and kindness."

This letter touched the good Countess' heart, and she repaired to Brussels the day before the event. Her friend, with whom Trouvère still remained, received her, and during the evening, while Trouvère was at the Conservatory rehearsal, Madame de Bellevue learned many details about him, that could not well have been given in their correspondence. She heard that Trouvère had but one passion, his violin. True, he loved to read poetry, to view the star-lit heavens, or to bend in dreamy worship over the flowers he culled in the meadow; but these were only means of inspiration, the origin of themes elucidated and embodied by his instrument; motives for improvisation, always beautiful, and often divine. Furthermore he was perfect in morals, in simplicity, aspiration, and tenderness, and yet possessed of a strong mind and will, which asserted themselves wherever decision was required. He had an exceedingly amiable disposition. After improvising some pathetic piece, when he saw that his aunt, (as he called his good hostess) was touched, sometimes to tears, he would approach her, seat himself on a foot-stool, put his arm around her waist, and, while stroking her white locks in his most caressing mood, say:

"You like my music, don't you, Aunt? You understand me when my soul feels sad, and my violin cries I have seen tears rolling down your eyes: now, now, do not deny it, for I have seen them. And how you did laugh when I tried to imitate the jabberings of two quarreling women! Well I love you, dear Aunt, for you are so good. I could play a whole night for you."

"And thus," said the lady, "Trouvére would sit at my knee by the hour, caressing and entertaining me, in the most innocent and winning fashion."

The Countess was more than delighted with the report she received of her protégé. The only drawback to her pleasure was the tears shed by her friend at the prospect of Trouvére's departure.

The next day was the one set for the distribution of the prizes. Several ministers of state had signified their intention to be present, and it was as usual, to be a grand affair. Half an hour before the appointed time, the Countess, her friend and Trouvére entered a carriage, and drove to the central music hall of the Conservatory. The young violinist had notified the director that Madame de Bellevue would attend, and as she was widely known in Belgium, one of the best seats was reserved for her. When they arrived many people of distinction were already assembled. Soon afterward came the Ministers of State, and now the orchestra began to play the overture of "Robin des Bois." When it was about half finished, and all were attentively listening to its beautiful execution, a courier, wearing the royal livery, entered the hall, and announced in a loud voice: "Le Roi."

Immediately the orchestra stopped, and a buzz of excitement ran through the audience. The director of the Conservatory, the professors, and ministers rose to

receive and welcome the King. On his entrance, the assemblage arose, and the orchestra played the national air, the Brabançonne. The King of a near country, his guest at the time, accompanied him, and the royal visitor was complimented in similar fashion. They seated themselves upon an elevated dais nearly facing the Countess. The Belgian King recognized her, for her merit and repute had gained for her an introduction at Court, and sent a general to present his regards.

The Countess could not suppress her delight, and a hum of appreciation pervaded the assembly. The mutual salutations ended, the orchestra resumed the overture, after which the distribution of prizes began. The director handed the diplomas, richly covered opera partitions; silver and bronze medals to the high dignitaries for distribution. The successful candidates were brought forward one by one to receive their awards, of which the last was the "*grand prix d'honneur*," a large gold medal now resting in its satin casket, upon a small table before the monarchs.

The director, leading Trouvère by the hand, brought him before their Majesties, introducing him as the successful candidate for the grand prize. They were struck by the manly and distinguished bearing of the young musician. Respectfully bowing, the young man glanced at one of the kings in his straight-forward, unsophisticated way. A strange sensation seized him. A kind of nervous tremor crept through his nerves and shook his frame, though he could not himself define his feelings. For an instant, he seemed to recognize, as in a flash, above the head of the visiting king, the face of the dark aristocratic woman he had seen so many times in his dreams, and the melody of whose strange, weird songs he so often endeavored to reproduce.

The Countess, as well as the audience, noticed Trouvére's perturbation, but all thought it natural on such an occasion. The King of the Belgians took the medal from its case, arose, and while the orchestra played a few strains of the national anthem, fastened it on young Trouvére's breast, saying a few complimentary and encouraging words. A round of applause from the audience greeted the laureate, who, instead of returning to his place, went straight to the Countess, and bending over her white locks, imprinted an affectionate kiss upon her noble forehead, saying aloud :

"It is to you that I owe this honor, and you must share it."

As all knew Trouvére's history, including even the ministers of state, another round of applause followed the act, and the good Countess, who had hitherto succeeded in suppressing her emotions, could no longer refrain from tears.

Meanwhile, a staff-officer brought the director word that the Belgian King wished to speak with him. After receiving his Majesty's commands, he went to inform Trouvére, who was still with the Countess, that the King had expressed a desire to hear the composition which had won the prize of honor.

Trouvére hesitated ; but the director brought his violin, placed it in his hand, placed him in the proper position and made him face their Majesties.

The audience again began to applaud. Trouvére felt the strange influence of a few moments ago come over him. He commenced to play. Hardly had he struck a few notes, when he saw above the head of one of the kings the same dark and haughty woman he thought he had seen there before. It seemed to him that she was singing one of her weird songs, and that he was imitating

her. His bow followed mechanically the intonations. It appeared to him as if the woman was singing through his violin. The King, above whose head the face of the woman appeared, soon grew intensely interested. He changed position several times, as if to bring his ear nearer to the violinist. The playing soon became very strange; now sweet, full of love and tenderness; now furious like the raging of a storm, and at times expressive of intense hatred. The monarch was transfixed, and his face grew deadly pale.

"Enough," he said with trembling voice extending his hand towards the musician, "enough."

Their Majesties arose and with them the audience—the former leaving the hall, were followed by their attendants and they were driven to the palace. One of the kings remained in his quarters, refusing to see any one; and, pacing his apartments in the deepest agitation, muttered; "Where could the young violinist have heard that wild strain, the very same she used to sing to me when she bound me with the spell of that tiger love of hers. Ah! that woman! that woman!"

CHAPTER VIII.

The Archbishop, in conversation with the Countess de Bellevue, while sipping tea in her library, had listened with marked interest to all the incidents of the young artist's career, and when the story was finished he remarked :

"Some day, Countess, I shall take the liberty of asking you to introduce me to the young gentleman. He must be of good parentage, a lost child, perhaps ; his talents and aspirations seem to indicate it."

"I am of the same opinion, Monseigneur, and I sincerely hope that Trouvère will find his parents some day ; for he seems at times in deep despondency, when brooding over the past. Well, Trouvère is the only person Olga has seen since his return a week ago : he likes to play for the ladies, who never tire of his music."

"It is very natural indeed for such an artist."

"Olga, I must confess, is strangely impressed by his music, and several times I have seen it bring tears to her eyes. I have also remarked that certain airs and melodies have the tendency to throw her into reveries, though she seems always to combat them."

"But, Countess," asked the Archbishop listening intently, "what is that delightful music?"

"Oh ! It is Trouvère ; I had forgotten that he asked permission to play a nocturne this evening ; I was to be present, but I had forgotten all about it."

"What strange, rich tones !"

"I am sure Olga is enthusiastically listening. If

Monseigneur will be kind enough to follow me, I will lead him to a place where, without being seen, he can observe the young ladies and the musician."

"I am at your command, Countess; please lead the way."

Passing through a long glass-covered corridor they entered a small apartment, from which unnoticed, they could see the young people assembled.

Trouvére was playing one of his favorite compositions; a wild, weird melody, full of crescendos and diminuendos, like a gusty wind, sweeping through a forest; now soft and supplicating, now harsh and commanding, but always harmonious and effective. He held the young ladies as though under a spell; the more so as his music was in keeping with the wildness of the night, for among the cypress trees in the garden, could be heard the moaning of a storm.

At first Olga could not be discovered, but presently the Archbishop observed her seated in a secluded nook, in the shadow of the stairway leading to the dormitories. The girl seemed as one entranced. Through her large expanded eyes, fixed upon the musician, her very soul appeared to look forth and to absorb every strain from the violin. When the melody became weird, her body seemed to shiver, to tremble with nervous excitement, and anon at some soft, appealing melody, a blush seemed to creep over her cheeks, her gaze seemed to soften, and her lips to smile. She was the true impersonation of Trouvére's genius, expressed in the language of music.

The Prelate regarded her with intense interest, and seemed almost to read her thoughts.

"Strange, strange," he said, "here in this western materialistic land, such a soul as this! O thou angel in

exile, may the Elohim direct thy footsteps, and guide thy destiny ! ”

Trouvére was absorbed in his melody ; his eyes were half closed ; his head followed the cadences of the music, and when he ceased to play, he seemed to awake as from a dream. His look was wandering and nervous, and he stared around him as if to discover where he was ; but perceiving Olga, his features became more calm and natural. Each seemed conscious of the abstraction and mental abandonment from which they had emerged, and at the same instant dropped their eyes, not as lovers, but like two souls who, by some invisible power, had for a moment been united in ethereal regions, and then returned to earth.

When Trouvére had finished, he saluted the young ladies, and retired to a small room in an aisle of the private apartments of Madame de Bellevue.

“ Did you observe her, Monseigneur ? ”

“ Yes, Countess, and with much interest. I observed also your young violinist. He seems to have the dreamy eye of the mystic. I will study him also. I think, dear Countess, you have a rich psychological mine in your institution. God alone knows what the future holds in store for those two ! If you will permit, I will visit you in a day or two, and we will try to find out whether Olga has any latent occult powers ; for if so, they may prove very interesting.”

“ You are ever welcome here, as you well know, Monseigneur, and I am always at your service.”

“ And I at yours,” he answered with a graceful inclination of the head. “ My carriage has arrived, and now, Countess, I shall wish you good-night.”

“ Good-night, Monseigneur.”

A few days later, toward evening, he again made his

appearance at the seminary, bringing with him a small casket, covered with purple velvet, which he carefully placed on a side table.

"Well, Countess," he said, "how is our little girl to-day?"

"Very well indeed, Monseigneur. Her teacher told me this forenoon that she was a strange, but most talented child, almost a genius. She knows all her lessons perfectly. Yet when studying, her eyes never seem to rest on the book, but are steadily fixed above it, giving one the impression, that she acquired her knowledge by intuition."

"It is! wonderful! wonderful!" ejaculated the Prelate.

The Countess was at a loss. While understanding the girl's faculties less and less, she was aware that the Monseigneur understood them ever more clearly. But to her all was as yet mystery.

"Countess, would you do me the favor of asking Miss Olga to take tea with us to-night? I wish to question her a little; but first she must be made to feel at home; so that she will not be embarrassed in her answers."

"Certainly, Monseigneur, with the greatest pleasure."

Olga was sent for, and soon appeared. She bowed respectfully to the Countess, and was introduced to the Archbishop, whom the reader doubtless recognizes as Bishop Angelo.

The young girl surprised at this unexpected honor, looked at her school uniform, and then reproachfully at the Countess, as though to say:

"Why did you not tell me of this? I might have dressed for the occasion."

"It is quite right, Olga," said the Countess in reply to this silent reproach. "Monseigneur likes our uni-

form very much, and prefers its simplicity to all the silks in the city. Sit near me, my child and take a cup of tea with us. Your teacher has just spoken of your remarkable progress in your studies, and of the manner in which you learn and recite your lessons. Monseigneur heard the report and expressed a wish to see you."

"I must congratulate you, Miss Livingston, upon the success which your diligence has won. Since my stay here, seldom have I heard a better account of any young student."

Thus saying, the Archbishop shook hands with her most cordially, causing the child's face to color, crimson red.

"And now, my dear Olga," said the Countess, "I wish you to remember that for to-night you are not my pupil but my guest; so you must act and speak as freely with us, as any of my visitors would do."

When the Archbishop had passed half an hour in conversation with Olga, she appeared to be quite at ease, and even to display a lively interest in his discourse. Observing this, he went to the side table upon which he had laid the velvet-covered case, and opening it by a secret spring, took out a mirror of concave form, upon the frame of which were painted mystic symbols—serpents, triangles, circles, and hieroglyphics. He placed the mirror on a table so that one looking on it should face the east.

"Miss Olga," he said, "will you be kind enough to walk this way and see how your features look in the mirror. It is a little different from an ordinary one; I brought it from India."

"Certainly, Monseigneur."

The Archbishop placed her in the position requir-

ed, and adjusting the mirror before her, at a certain angle of inclination, said :

“Now, Miss Olga, look steadily at the glass, and tell us whether you see anything there besides your own face.”

The child looked at him in astonishment, as if she did not understand his words, while the Prelate, joining Madame de Bellevue, requested her in a low voice to be silent, and to listen attentively to whatever the girl might say.

“Well,” said Olga, moving her head from right to left, “I do not see my face at all ; this is a strange mirror ! It seems as if a mass of thick white-clouds were rolling over and over ! Ah ! now the clouds appear less dense ; they become more transparent, like a fog. Something shines through the mist. A landscape, and now a cottage, in a clump of trees. In the distance I see a large building like the palace of a king. I see two ladies, covered with long cloaks, slowly descending the stairway of the building. One is old ; the other young ; both seem agitated, as if in anxious expectation ; they direct their steps toward the cottage ; they enter.”

The Archbishop was breathless and the Countess, who knew the history of the Prince de Silvereau, listened intently to every word of this startling revelation.

Olga continued :

“Now I see a young man, an officer. He raps at the front door of the cottage. The elder of the two ladies opens the door and beckons to him to enter.”

“Enough, my child,” said the Archbishop, greatly excited, “we will continue this some other time.” But extending her hands toward the Prelate, almost with an air of command, Olga proceeded as if unaware of his presence.

"I see the young officer bending his knee before the lady, as if taking leave of one for whom he holds the tenderest regard and the deepest respect. But what is this? The scene changes; the cottage and the landscape have disappeared."

The Archbishop uttered a sigh of relief.

"Now I see the interior of a lady's boudoir; the furniture is very rich, and the room is full of ornaments rich and rare. On a satin-covered divan, a lady is seated. She is of middle age and tears are in her eyes. Oh! The room she is in belongs to a palace; she—she looks like a queen!" ejaculated Olga with an accent of wonder.

The Archbishop's form was bent forward as if to catch every breath that fell from the young girl's lips. The Countess was no less interested.

"Now the Queen brushes away her tears," continued the maid. "Slowly and painfully she lifts her head, supporting it with her hand; her elbow rests on a small marble table, and she seems to be in deep thought. And now images appear before her and vanish one after another. Oh! I begin to understand; they are the pictures of her thoughts. I see suddenly appearing the portrait of the handsome officer who entered the little cottage at night near the palace, and who bowed to the younger of the two ladies, while taking his leave. Hush!" said the child, placing her fingers over her lips. "I see the image of the young lady moving slowly toward the Queen, looking more and more like her as it approaches. It draws nearer and nearer, and now,—now it merges into the Queen and disappears. Yes, the young lady of the cottage, is the unhappy Queen. How very strange."

The Archbishop and the Countess were mute with astonishment. After a few minutes Olga exclaimed:

"Now the young officer appears again."

At these words the Prelate hurriedly left his seat, approaching Olga with the intention of taking away the mirror; but the girl, fixing her beautiful eyes upon him, and extending her arm said in a firm voice:

"Please be seated, Monseigneur."

Madame de Bellevue was deeply affected, but with eyes fixed upon her pupil who now appeared to her as a sybil, sat motionless as a statue.

Olga resumed her description:

"I see the young officer of the cottage, dressed like a monk and looking much older. What strange things move before my eyes! Now I see him in a foreign land and surrounded by tropical vegetation. The people around him are strangely dressed. They wear long yellow robes, and turbans on their heads. The monk seems to be of some high priestly rank. He is coming this way. I see you also in the mirror, Monseigneur; well, he is going toward you; Monseigneur; he is——"

At this point the Archbishop stepped forward, and made a pass with his hand over the mirror, whereupon Olga exclaimed: "All is dark; I can see nothing more."

Monseigneur replaced the mirror in the casket, on the table from which he had taken it. To relieve the situation which was a little embarrassing for all, he said:

"Countess, I told you a few days ago, that I should ask for an introduction to your musical laureate. Would it be inconvenient for you to grant this favor to-night? I wish very much to hear him, and this evening I should be glad to listen to him."

Madame de Bellevue readily acquiesced to the suggestion, and immediately rang the bell for her servant.

Olga blushed and her eyelids drooped.

Presently the artist entered with his instrument. He had been apprised of the Archbishop's visit and was attired in evening dress. As he stood at the entrance of the salon, he appeared in features and physique the very type of perfect humanity. His tall, erect figure, his lofty forehead, his hair black as the raven's wing, his dark southern complexion, his dreamy, jet black eyes, and mystic brow attracted at once the Prelate's attention.

Saluting the company gracefully as he entered, Trouvére at once approached the Countess, taking her hands in both of his, affectionately. After introducing him to the Archbishop she motioned him to a seat.

"My dear Trouvére," she said, "Monseigneur has heard of your success at the Conservatory, and has expressed a desire to hear you. Will you favor us with one of your improvisations? Not operatic music or grand sonatas; just obey the inspiration of the moment, if there be any."

"I shall feel honored, indeed, to play before Monseigneur," replied he with a graceful inclination of the head. "As for inspiration," he added in a gentle voice, "you are aware Countess, that whenever you are present, the inspiration of love never fails." His eyes, however, met those of Olga, who was seated on the other side of the Countess.

"Very well, very well," answered the latter, with a smile of evident satisfaction.

Trouvére arose and tuned his instrument, during which process his eyes often met Olga's. He looked upward for a moment, as if waiting for an inspiration; then his eyes meeting those of the young girl again, he commenced playing. The tones, at first low, soft, and

plaintive, as if expressing the most tender pleading; soon became richer and more melodious, and now more earnest, tender, and beseeching, as though of supplication, of fervent prayer. Was the inspiration an earnest appeal to the Infinite Father; a mystic longing to know the unknowable, the surgings of a soul toward the limitless regions of ethereal space, or was it the translation through music of the aspirations of a noble and pure first love? Certain it was that the hearts of all were touched, and that each one could interpret the beautiful soul-elevating harmony according to his or her own mental state.

Olga, with her beautiful blue eyes steadily fixed upon the musician, drank in every note, every intonation, as eagerly as the morning sun absorbs the glittering dew. The feelings that the tender melodies of the young artist awoke in her soul were like a new revelation. They seemed to find a ready place there, to fill a void, and to be a natural part of herself. She felt her vital forces quickened and more intensified. Did she ask what all this meant? No, while the dear, pure-hearted child continued to look at Trouvére, to drink in all the rich melody that his violin gave forth, she seemed to understand it, to assimilate it, almost to love it; for every feeling it awoke in her was pure, holy, uplifting. Did she know what that feeling was? No. To her it was like that of worship, and she felt that Trouvére was worshipping with her.

The violinist, entirely absorbed in his playing, was under the same spell that bound the maiden. He felt it was his soul that was playing, and he let it play. He knew that the violin translated correctly his feelings, and he let it translate. His eyes were often riveted on those

of Olga, and a celestial current seemed to unite and fill them both.

Angelo's thoughts had returned to the period described a few moments before by Olga, when looking in the mirror, and those of the Countess had also reverted to an epoch in her youth when all was sunshine and love—a period which the Revolution brought to so abrupt a termination.

The musician ceased to play. A sigh, as from the depths of the soul, escaped from each, and as Trouvére took his seat beside the Countess, applause greeted his masterly effort; but only when all had recovered from the spell produced by his violin. Conversation languished for a while. Every one appeared to be in deep reflection. Monseigneur was the first to recover, and at once engaged in conversation with Trouvére and Olga.

The Countess was mute, still probably intent on the memories that the player had awakened. Her eyes fell upon the velvet casket, and slowly the desire grew upon her to look into the mirror, to see if it would picture any of her past.

The Archbishop had followed the direction of her eyes, and divining her wish nodded assent, presenting the mirror and beckoning her to take the seat which Olga had occupied. The Countess did so. Meanwhile the Archbishop had moved nearer to the divan, where Olga and Trouvére were now seated together. The young couple moved closer toward each other, until they were as near as etiquette would allow. The Archbishop made many inquiries about Olga's parents, and Trouvére's sojourn in Brussels. Their answers were not always to the point, their minds being occupied with each other, for they had never before met so informally. They

comprehended each other perfectly, and were conscious of their mutual love, although they knew not exactly the meaning of earthly love.

Meanwhile, the Countess was looking in the mirror. Soon her gaze became more steady, and the Archbishop perceived from the expression of her features that she saw things which deeply interested her. Presently he asked whether the mirror revealed anything.

"I see heavy black clouds moving in the distance," she answered, dreamily.

Monseigneur seemed very much astonished that the lady saw anything at all, for sensitives only can see and he had not classed her as such.

"Now the clouds slowly become transparent, and I behold a large city. It is Paris. I recognize the cathedral of Notre Dame. A public square is in view. It is early morning. The sun is not yet above the horizon. Workmen are busy erecting a structure of timber in the centre of the square. It is slowly assuming shape. My God, it is the guillotine!" exclaimed the Countess, greatly excited; "and now the dark clouds have appeared again."

"You must keep calm, Madame, or the mirror will no longer disclose its secrets; calmness is absolutely necessary."

"It would be well to hide them rather than reveal such horrors as that."

Olga and Trouvére were still seated on the divan. For them the scenes in the magic mirror had little interest. They felt so embarrassed in each other's presence, and in such close proximity, that they did not venture to speak. Their hearts were beating strong and fast, and as their eyes met, their cheeks turned crimson. They knew, however, that there was nothing wrong in being

so near each other, for they had no evil thought or purpose, in fact they had no thoughts or purpose at all. Trouvére reached out his hand, and Olga met it half way. Thus linked together, their auras interblended; their souls communed; they were filled with an influx of all that is good and holy; a celestial halo surrounded them, and from this moment their kindred souls were firmly united. This is love in the higher life; and so, with bowed heads, joined hands, and unobserved, they allowed their spirits to commune in all their celestial purity.

"Now," continued Madame de Bellevue, after a pause, "the people are arriving from all sides. One street is densely packed with men and woman. They howl like demons at the arrival of a cart, in which are several persons. Now the cart is at the foot of the guillotine. A man walks up the steps of the hideous structure; they offer to support him; he pushes them away, and steps firmly upon the platform; the executioner seizes him. O God! It is my husband." And the Countess fell back into her chair in a swoon.

In an instant Olga and Trouvére were at her side. Monseigneur rang the bell, the servant came, and Madame de Bellevue was carried unconscious to her room.

"Be not alarmed, my children," said Angelo to the young couple, who were beside themselves with grief. "There is no danger whatever."

Motioning the servant to withdraw, he told them to control their emotions, to dispel the anxious look they wore, and to appear as unconcerned as possible when the Countess should revive, for he was about to restore her to consciousness. Entering her chamber he placed the thumb of his right hand between her eyebrows, the

palm and fingers extending over the brain ; his left hand upon the solar plexus, and after one minute, said in an imperative tone :

“Awake !”

The Countess slowly opened her eyes, and looked at Monseigneur in utter astonishment.

“A little nervous attack, Countess ; nothing, nothing,” he said. “Take a cup of warm tea, and rest. Good-bye, Countess ; I shall call soon.”

Monseigneur returned to the parlor, placed the mirror in its casket, called for his carriage and drove home.

CHAPTER IX.

THE night following that eventful evening was a remarkable one for Olga Livingston. Awakening from a troubled sleep, she seemed to be surrounded with objects and scenery disassociated entirely from Madame de Bellevue's seminary. Although darkness had spread its veil over the land, the vista before her was brightly illuminated with brilliant colors and tints extending into space. Nearest to the earth and overhanging the city, she noticed a glowing atmosphere of dark red. Above this was a brighter cloud region of dark blue, fading to an azure, as it extended upward. Higher still, much higher, she could perceive a resplendent effulgence of golden yellow, so beautiful, so attractive, as to arouse a secret longing to merge herself in its radiance. As she gazed upon the view, it seemed to broaden by the addition of small golden clouds of different sizes and forms, constantly arriving from every direction. All of them seemed to present a vague outline of the human face. In one, she could see two uplifted eyes, which wore an expression of fervent adoration; in another, she perceived two beautiful little hands joined in the attitude of prayer; in all these luminous messengers could be read some lofty sentiment of the human soul. "What are these clouds?" she mentally asked. "What is their meaning?"

A closer scrutiny revealed to her that a minute golden thread, hardly perceptible, connected these little clouds with the earth. On tracing them she saw that they had

their origin in a large building, surmounted with high steeples, and proceeded from the heads of a group of nuns, who, with joined hands and uplifted eyes, were repeating the solemn prayers of the midnight vigil in the chapel of their cloister. She now remembered that they belonged to a strict religious order, and were widely known for their ascetic habits and high intellectual attainments; none being admitted into the sisterhood but graduates of some high institution of learning.

Enshrouding the city, except where stood this cloister, and especially over its lower and marshy parts, Olga noticed a dark, heavy, oppressive atmosphere, in direct contact with the earth. There also she observed small black clouds flitting to and fro, and on a closer observation discovered, with feelings of loathing, that they assumed the shape of human faces, hideous of aspect. Some had the expression of intense hatred; others, with eyes protruding and bloodshot, seemed to wander in search of victims; all were repulsive in the extreme and caused her to shudder. Seeing black threads also, attached to these frightful spectres, she had the curiosity to follow some of them to their source, and found that they proceeded from inmates of the criminal quarters of the city. Nerving herself to gaze on this loathsome scene, she saw that the threads were connected with the brains of two men, deeply absorbed in thoughts of crime, planning to rob or to murder. The conviction was forced upon her, that these black clouds, or spectres in human guise, were the results of their very thoughts or *thought-images*.

Nervous and alarmed at her unexpected discoveries, the child rested her head upon the pillow, and earnestly longed for sleep. The vision vanished; in a few mo-

ments she became unconscious, and awoke only at the sound of the seminary's morning bell.

The following day, Olga felt much disturbed. She could not concentrate her mind upon her studies. The visions of the preceding night haunted her persistently. In the afternoon, after vain endeavours to regain her composure, by chasing away the recollections of the night, she asked to see Madame de Bellevue, and being granted an interview, with tears in her eyes asked her for permission to go to the Archbishop's palace for confession. The good lady was much astonished at Olga's request, but reading in her disturbed features a secret agitation, forbore to question her. She answered that, toward evening, after the school duties were over, her carriage would take her to the palace. Olga kissed her with much tenderness, and regaining her tranquility returned to her class.

Toward evening Olga was notified that the carriage was waiting, and twenty minutes later the coachman rang the bell at the outer door of the palace. A liveried servant opened it, and without waiting for Olga's inquiry, said to her in a very respectful tone of voice, that his Grace had ordered him to conduct the young lady to his rooms at once. Olga was somewhat astonished, for she could not imagine how the Archbishop could have been aware of her coming. Following the servant, she entered the private apartments of the Prelate, and hardly was she seated, when he entered, and with hand extended and a most affectionate smile, said :

"I knew, my child, that you were coming. I am aware of the disturbed condition of your mind."

The girl asked him to be good enough to hear her confession. He consented, and put on his sacerdotal vestments. Then Olga knelt beside him, and in a tremb-

ling voice, related her vision of the previous night, and asked for absolution. After listening attentively to her story he said very kindly :

“ You need no absolution, dear child ; for you have committed no sin. The visions you had were no fancies of a disordered or sinful mind, but realities existing in the super-sensuous world. These scenes are beheld with the eyes of the soul, when the physical senses are in a condition of perfect rest. But, dear child,” he continued, while laying aside his vestments, “ your nerves have been much excited by those visions, and you have partaken of no food to-day ; accompany me into the adjoining room and a cup of tea will soon make you feel better.”

The child was much confused, and entirely unable to account for the manner in which the priest spoke of her visions. He seemed to know all about them, just as if he himself had witnessed them. Instead of being calmed she became more nervous. The Archbishop, however, by his entertaining conversation, by the recital of many of his experiences in India, and by his description of the life of the Buddhist priests, who dwell almost constantly in the super-sensuous world, and whose life is, so to say, one continuous vision, succeeded in bringing Olga back to her normal condition. She was much pleased when he told her that the gift of seeing visions was bestowed upon the priests only, after a life spent in religious exercises, in prayer and holy rites. This gift, he said, might be cultivated to such a degree that man could almost see God face to face, if he would but strive to lead a life, as nearly as possible, god-like in purity and holiness, a life of perfect sanctification. Such a statement from a Church authority, so high in rank, not only tranquilized the mind of Olga, but created a secret

desire that visions should be unfolded to her until she beheld things holy, and grew nearer and nearer to her Maker.

"My dear Miss Livingston," said the Archbishop, "I wish to make you acquainted with a holy man of India, who possesses the gift of seeing visions to as high a degree as is given unto mortals. Soon he will be here and then the significance of your visions will be explained by him. I shall send word to Madame de Bellevue not to be anxious about your absence, and that you will be escorted safely home. Now, Miss Olga, be kind enough to follow me."

The Prelate led the child through halls and corridors to the eastern extremity of the palace, and opening a side door, said to Olga:

"In that room you will find everything necessary for the ablutions which the orientals never neglect before entering the Holy of Holies; for, dear child you are about to be introduced into the sanctuary of this palace, where the profane may not enter. You will meet there one of the holy men of the East, one of the same ancient Order to which belonged the very magi who appeared in Egypt, and greeted the infant Jesus at the time of his birth in the stable of Bethlehem."

Olga's large, spiritual eyes showed such bewilderment that again the Prelate exercised his influence to tranquilize her.

"It will be a great blessing to you, to meet so holy a man, and we must meet him as is befitting, both physically and spiritually. We make ample ablutions to wash away the last vestige of the promiscuous aura which the outside world inflicts. This done, you will put on a robe of pure white, which you will find in the room, as also the sandals placed there. When thus prepared,

give three distinct raps at the inside door, which will then be opened to you ; it leads into the sanctuary. May the spirits of the holy ones descend upon you, and dwell with you forever more," he said, while bestowing his apostolic blessing upon the child.

When the door closed upon her, Olga fell upon her knees, much disturbed in spirit. With hands clasped and uplifted, she uttered the most fervent prayer she had ever addressed to the Throne of Grace. Calm was gradually restored, and a feeling of faith and trust took possession of her whole being. After ablutions, she robed herself in the beautiful snow white garment, and stepping resolutely to the inner door, rapped three times. It was opened instantly, and she found herself in the sanctuary of the palace. A few steps in front was a *prie-Dieu* on which she knelt in humble supplication. Then gazing on the sanctuary, she observed that it was built in a perfectly circular form, and covered by a lofty dome. Light entered through a window directly above her. The floor was covered with a soft, velvety carpet of snowy whiteness, except for a few concentric circles, in the middle of the room, within the circumference of which were triangles and figures of strange form, the meaning of which Olga did not understand. Near the rim of the outer circle was the *prie-Dieu*. Close to the wall, and placed as far as she could judge, at the cardinal points, were four seats on elevated platforms.

Presently the door opposite to her was opened, and the Archbishop entered, clad in a robe of spotless white, and knelt on a *prie-Dieu*, placed, as was the other, near the verge of the outer circle. For some moments his features were motionless, and he appeared as though absorbed in deep invocation, while the child also bent

low in prayer. And now was heard the note of silver bells of sweetest resonance.

"Let us pray," said the Archbishop "for the Master is coming."

While still absorbed in prayer, Olga heard his voice exclaiming:

"Welcome, Master."

Looking up, she beheld, standing in the center of the circles, a being clad in white, whose tall figure was surrounded by a radiance so bright that she could not gaze upon him.

The Master said in a sweet voice: "Let us pray together." Then, in a standing posture, he devoutly inclined his head, with hands crossed upon his breast. During the short prayer which followed, Olga saw herself enwrapped in rays of light emanating from the Master's person, causing a glow so genial, so vivifying, that a feeling of intense happiness and trust pervaded her being. The sensation rose to the brain, and gradually transformed it into a nucleus of a sun-like brightness, the radiations of which extended far into space, opening the portals of the super-sensuous world to Olga's consciousness.

At this point the Master took Olga by the hand, and slowly led her to one of the elevated seats, with her face toward the east. He mentally suggested that she might allow her spiritual vision to roam at will into space. Then he withdrew slowly to the opposite chair and motioned the Archbishop to be seated by his side.

"This night have I come," said the Hindoo, in an impressive tone of voice, "to explain the meaning of the young girl's vision, which is a matter of great importance and scientific interest.

“The different colored regions in the atmosphere, are nothing more nor less than the auric zones of the earth. The dark red zone, hovering above the city and nearest to it, is the zone corresponding to the nervous or animal aura in man. This nervous aura, is a subtle emanation of the vital parts of man, of his nerves, viscera and the like; as is the dark red aura of the earth, a subtle emanation of all her vital parts, especially of her mineral veins, each one emitting the kind of electricity or magnetism special to its own constitution.

“The azure-like zone immediately above, corresponds to man’s intellectual auric zone.

“The beautiful, brilliant, golden light, perceived by the child, and extending its ramifications far away into space, is the spiritual auric zone of the earth.

“These various auric zones of our planet are the receptacles or storage rooms of the thoughts of man, for human thoughts are living entities, and find conditions propitious to their existence in the auric zones I have described.

“There are two kinds of thought; the positive and the negative. A positive thought is one which originates in man; it is the concretion or condensation of a part of his aura produced by the workings of his brain. These concretions take the physical shape or image of the qualities the thought represents. As soon as emitted from the brain, these thought-images travel by natural attraction to the auric zone of the earth, with which they are in greatest affinity. The little, brilliant clouds which Olga saw, expressing the sentiments of adoration and prayer, and sent up to the Throne of Grace by the nuns during their midnight vigils, were thought-images or concretions of their spiritual aura, and as she truly perceived, went directly upwards, to take their place in

the zone to which they naturally belonged. These were positive thoughts, and to-day they exist as living entities in the spiritual auric zone of our planet.

"The black clouds, representing the thoughts of evil doers, were also positive thoughts, and continue to live in the foul strata of the lower regions of the earth's abnormal and mephitic aura.

"Toward the blue or intellectual aura of the earth, converge all human thoughts having for subject the various sciences and branches of learning.

"The dark red auric region which Olga perceived resting just above the city, is the abode of all sensuous and selfish thoughts; the true home of animalism."

The Archbishop was deeply impressed by the clear elucidation of this occult and momentous truth. It was logical, it was scientific, and his mind grasped readily the theory of thought formation, of thought-image, and how thought became an entity, a force for good or for evil.

"Now," continued the Master, in his solemn tone of voice; "I will explain to you what I mean by the negative thoughts of man. These are in mode of formation exactly opposite to the positive ones. Let us well understand this occult process.

"With a positive thought, as we have explained, the process of formation is commenced by a voluntary action of man's brain, a volition, a desire perhaps, but this voluntary thought can only take form or image by a concretion of aura, in direct affinity with the purport or quality of the thought. If the thought be sensual, it will be a concretion of nervous or animal aura. If it be intellectual, it will call for the elements of its existence upon the intellectual aura of man; and similarly, if it

be of a spiritual nature, the thought will be a concretion of the beautiful rays of man's spiritual aura.

"All these thoughts, guided by natural attraction, finally take their place among the different auric zones of our planet. Many grades of thought, as may well be imagined, are constantly received into these zones, and according to their tendency, purify or pollute them, add to or detract from their quality.

"Contrary to the positive thought, which, as we have seen, originates in man, the negative thought proceeds from the auric zone of the earth, whence, passing along the rays of man's corresponding auric zone, to his brain, it there formulates itself into a concrete thought, influencing for good or evil the cells of that part of the brain which are in affinity with the nature of the thought."

The Master seeing the Archbishop absorbed in deep meditation, continued :

"I will make this abstract truth more plain, Brother Angelo."

"I would be very thankful, dear Master, for to me, this subject is of absorbing interest."

"Follow me then attentively. In the process of religious contemplation, for instance, your mind reaches forth to infinite space, in search of its object. We will suppose that this object is Parabrahm or the Godhead in its pure essence. The first operation is to send the purest rays of your spiritual aura into the spiritual auric zone of our planet, for there are treasured all thoughts concerning the divine Godhead, emitted since time immemorial from the most spiritualized brains of earth. The loftiest thoughts, reposing in that zone in harmony with your own spiritual development, will be readily met by your own auric rays, and will enter into the consciousness of your receptive brain. This is the true

process of inspiration. Thus will your spiritual aura become brighter. And here, let me repeat to you, for this cannot be too well understood, that those new thoughts which have been brought down to your brain, had ascended to the spiritual zone of earth from mortals, either living or who have lived upon this earth; that those thoughts were a vital part of their own existence, and have now through the process of inspiration become reincarnated in yourself. This is a phase of re-incarnation which we hope to elucidate further on in the continued lessons of the third degree.

“To proceed with the negative thoughts of man. We will say that the student of the natural sciences, in his moments of abstract thought or research, will also find in the intellectual zone of our earth ideas more advanced than his own, which he may appropriate to the material benefit of the world. And here I will state that it is the special province of many adepts of the third degree to study unremittingly the natural laws governing the Universe. This study, owing to their clairvoyant and intuitive powers, they pursue with great success, thus sending up constantly into the intellectual auric zone of earth, true and advanced theories relating to those momentous laws. From this scientific fountain-head your scientists may draw more or less successfully, according to the degree of intuition with which they are gifted. This also explains why the same scientific discoveries or inventions are often made almost simultaneously in different parts of the world.”

“I thoroughly understand,” remarked the Archbishop, “the philosophy and co-relation of the auras of man with those of the planet upon which we live. I also realize, fully, the grave responsibility to man of the

thoughts which he creates, for they may be potent agents either for good or evil."

"And true it is, dear brother. Men should watch their thoughts with exceeding care, and especially keep themselves aloof from all impressions which are of a degrading character; for if they do not heed they will surely suffer, and that until the debasing thought which they have sent up into the auras of the earth, shall be purified by a new incarnation."

Turning to Olga, the Master asked: "What new vision is at present before you, in which you appear so interested?"

"I see strange and beautiful sights," she answered. "Every house in the city seems to be open to me. I am watching with great interest a group of gentlemen and ladies, belonging to the wealthier class, as I judge from their dresses, and the carriages which bring them. They are assembled in the elegant parlor of a magnificent mansion. They seem to hold a secret meeting, for strict instructions have been given the servants to admit none but recognized members.

"Upon an elevated platform, a gentleman is standing; his eyes are closed, his features pale; his appearance feminine and delicate; his movements betray a very nervous temperament. I hear some of the members say: 'I wonder what spirit will control him to-day!' 'He is a remarkable being,' says another. 'The spirits of the greatest men that have lived on earth speak through him. If our friends knew what we are doing here to-night, and the purpose which brings us together, we should be hooted out of the city, I suppose, or surely taken for insane persons, for nowhere else in the world is to be found such an association as ours, receiving communications from the spirits of the departed.'

"The gentleman on the platform," continued Olga, "has commenced speaking; his eyes are still closed; his auditors hang on his lips, and treasure up with avidity every word he utters; he is eloquent; his speech is animated and lofty in the extreme."

"Look whence his inspiration comes," said the Master.

Olga paused for a while and then remarked :

"I see a large ray of beautiful light start upward from his head toward the golden region which I saw in space, in my last night's vision. Thence there descends on him a continuous stream of a bright yellow hue arousing his brain to great activity and causing him to speak. His speech elicits continued applause and wonder, and his listeners say that he is influenced by the spirit of the greatest man that ever lived."

"Do you see any spirits in the golden region whence the influence flows to his brain?"

"No," answered the child after a pause.

"The existence of this little society is not ignored by the Brethren of the Himalayas," said the Master to the Archbishop, "and some of the latter have been following its course with great interest."

"Is it really possible," remarked the latter, "that this little far off society can have come under the notice of the Masters?"

"It has; and henceforth, to follow all its proceedings and note the divers phases through which it may pass, will be one of the tasks devolving upon you, Brother Angelo; but I will explain. The members of this gathering are all intelligent persons and belong to the most respectable classes of society. They earnestly believe that they receive communications from the spirits of the departed, and are guided by them. The mouth-piece of the spirits is a young gentleman who has

suffered from hysteria since childhood, and hence has a nervous system exceedingly sensitive to outside influences. He enters naturally into the magnetic or ecstatic state, whenever he sends to heaven an earnest prayer, asking for light on some important theme, as God, man, or immortality. A natural born mystic, and leading the purest and noblest life, this young speaker has access to some of the highest spiritual thoughts stored in the psychic reservoirs of the brilliant golden region seen by Olga. Through his noble aspirations, he sends up rays of his own spiritual aura into this spiritual auric zone of the earth, and thence draws the sublime inspirations which, owing to his ecstatic condition, he realizes in a manner so powerful as to enable his organs of speech to translate them easily into beautiful and poetical language.

"The transcendent thoughts, thus drawn from the higher strata of the spiritual zone of our planet, necessarily bear the impress of the mortals who originated them. And when these very thoughts are uttered with their attendant characteristics, sometimes entirely at variance with the speaker's habitual ways and modes of utterance, they create a firmly rooted belief that it is not he who speaks, but the very spirits of the sages and wise men who lived upon earth in times gone by. This belief, so positively held by his hearers, soon reflects back on the sensitive brain of the speaker himself and is there indelibly engrafted."

"His speech is terminated," says Olga. "He rubs his eyes as if awakening from a dream. He descends from the platform among the audience, and is warmly congratulated by every one."

"Now, all the members seat themselves around a table of oval form," continues Olga, after a pause. "They join hands; a lady of pale features and appar-

ently of delicate health, upon whom all eyes are fixed, becomes very nervous ; her hands and arms twitch ; her head leans backward ; her eyes close ; she utters a deep sigh. Around the heads and bodies of those in the circle, I see emanations of light, which flow steadily along the chain of hands to the delicate lady who has just closed her eyes, and form round her a bright halo. She tells the members of the group to retire to an adjoining room ; for she wishes to speak with each one, as is her custom, privately. Her request is complied with, and she bids the only member remaining to extend his hands to her ; and now the light emanating from the heads of both closely interblends, and a vivid ray or current is established between them. The lady proceeds to relate the history of her companion, and to talk of his future projects, saying that he will succeed in all his undertakings. She speaks at length and dwells on many periods of his life, concerning which she seems to make important revelations. Astonished at her power of discovering hidden truths, he leaves her to make place for another, who in turn, dumbfounded at such extraordinary clairvoyance, gives room to a third, and so on in succession."

"In this phase of psychic development," interrupted the Master, "lies the great danger of the future. The lady, whom Olga sees, when sitting in the circle, becomes magnetized by the strong odic currents directed upon her, and flowing along the chain of hands. If the lady had spoken while in contact with the several members of the group, her speech would have echoed the average sentiments of the members, and from their interblended auras would she have drawn her inspirations. As it is, she gives an isolated session to each one ; hence her revelations concern only the person with whom she is in

contact. Holding his hand in hers, and being in a super-sensuous state, she senses thoroughly the aura of her interlocutor, discovers in it all his thoughts, aims, projects, aspirations, however secret, and relates them as discoveries of her own. Not knowing the philosophy of psychic law, she honestly believes them to be revealed by the spirits of departed mortals. In this theory of spirits lies the danger to come; for plainly can we see that, by degrees, it will spread among all the nations of the earth. It is full of allurements. It speaks intimately to that mysterious something which lies hidden deep in the bosom of man. It will foster, to a pernicious extent, the innate desire of every human being to know the future; and so to every ignorant man or woman afflicted with hysteria, it will afford an opportunity to assume the office of priest or priestess, and thus give rise to divers kinds of superstition, however honest its votaries may be. In a word, this theory is apt to create a hot-bed of imposition and fraud, through the machinations of unprincipled individuals.

“These magnetic circles are pregnant with danger. The first effect which their currents engender is to vivify the latent thoughts, feelings and idiosyncracies of every member of the circle. If one be perfectly moral, and his aspirations lofty, such qualities will be magnified and strengthened; but if lewd or sensual persons be unwittingly admitted, their sinful propensities and cravings will also be vivified by the magnetic or odilic current, and, what is more to be dreaded, will be carried in an intensified form, to the brain of every member of the circle. You may readily imagine the deleterious effect thus produced on the pure, negative, receptive brain of the young girls who may be admitted to these circles.

"But the greatest danger of all lies in the belief that holy spirits preside at the circle, and that the thoughts which the members receive are inspired by their guardian angels. Thus a feeling of lust, slowly creeping over a participant, and instilled solely by the contact of a depraved individual, is apt to be entertained as coming from some holy spirit. A reason will then be found for various sensual theories of soul-affinity, resulting in utter degradation and the overthrow of those sacred ties which bind society together in a holy bond.

"All these possibilities we see in the future, and it will be one of the great tasks of our Brotherhood to counteract these errors. Light will gradually be thrown upon the influence which these psychic forces, originating in the aura of man, exercise on the moral nature of a sensitive person."

"But do spirits not communicate with man upon this earth?" asked the Archbishop wondering.

"I might almost truly say, no; the occurrences being so rare. The members of our Brotherhood do indeed at times communicate with the higher spirits, but only when planetary conditions are favorable. Olga will communicate with the celestial beings when her spiritual nature shall be fully unfolded. She would see spirits at this moment, if I wished her to do so. We are all surrounded by spirits; the earth is teeming with them as you well know, but they cannot hold communication with man, any more than can the bird with the larva under ground. When man has become pure and angel-like; in fact, when he has attained to the degree of spirituality where his earthly senses are completely subdued, and has become the supreme master of self; then, being almost a spirit, can he sometimes communicate with the inhabitants of air. You, Brother Angelo, when

at the monastery in India, have been in communication with lofty spirits, the guardians of our Order."

At this moment was heard the silvery tones of the astral bells. Olga looked up astonished, but could not discover whence proceeded these low, soft chimes. The Archbishop motioned her to the prayer-desk, himself occupying the one upon which he had knelt on entering. The Master stepped toward the center of the circles drawn on the floor, and inclined his head in the attitude of prayer. Olga imitated him, as did the Archbishop.

The prayer finished, both raised their heads, and saw that the Master had disappeared. The poor child was awe-stricken. The Archbishop led the way to the interior of his palace, Olga following. By telling her to have faith, to be silent, and that the holy ones would watch over her, he soon restored her to a state of comparative calmness. A carriage conveyed her back to the seminary.

The Prelate then retired to his private room, to ponder over the important teachings he had received that evening from his Hindoo Master. He could with difficulty concentrate his mind, however, some disturbing influence seeming to surround him. This influence becoming more powerful, and being unable to shake it off, he determined to find out its meaning. Hypnotising himself in a few seconds, he discovered that it came from Dolora, who was in great distress at the royal palace. He saw that the Queen was terribly oppressed by the dark spirit which he had noticed near her in the vision of the magic mirror, when in India, and he concluded, when the propitious moment should arrive, to destroy once for all the influence of the malevolent being whose intense hatred of the Queen was to him incomprehensible.

CHAPTER X.

IN a secluded spot about forty miles below the Mission of El Carmelo, in Monterey county, California, once lived a nomadic tribe of strange and peculiar type. They were not Indians, nor yet white. They had the dark complexion of people living in southern countries, but their physical traits indicated a different origin from any of the known continental varieties. They lived in tents and caves, numbered no more than fifty, and were ruled by a Queen, who had absolute dominion over them. This Queen was about fifty years of age, tall, stately, graceful, and still retaining much of the beauty of her youth. Her eyes were black as jet, very deep and penetrating, and her mien and presence imposing.

These people were very religious. Their place of worship was in a cave, lighted by a fire, built upon a pile of huge rocks. This was always kept burning, each one feeding it daily with a piece of resinous wood. It was the sacred fire of the Aztecs.

The Queen was one of the direct descendants of the Montezumas, though this was known only to herself and her people.

One evening, as they were seated in their common tent at the evening repast, the little camp was thrown into commotion by the sudden appearance of a stranger, a white man, on horseback. His arrival being announced to the Queen, she gave orders that he be brought into her presence. The stranger meantime had dismounted, requesting in English, needful food for him-

self and horse, and an opportunity for rest, but nobody seemed to understand him. After being led before the Queen, who was sitting in state upon bear-skins, and surrounded by six attendants, armed with sharp pointed spikes, he was asked his name, and the nature of his errand in that wild and unpeopled country.

The stranger answered that his name was Livingston, that he was an American, and had come to California, where the climate was mild and warm, to find a location for a colony of good and worthy people, where they might live in peace and harmony, sheltered from the storms of the world.

"And what is their religion?" asked the Queen.

"Our religion is to worship the Infinite Father; our faith is in Him, and our hope, to become one with Him, the Creator of all things; to love our brother man, and give him all the material and spiritual aid that a brother can afford. Our temple is the Universe; our roof, the sky; our sacred fires, the stars of Heaven; our music, the songs that the birds and the winds give us."

The Queen was much pleased by the answer of her visitor. Her attendants conducted him to the great tent, and there offered him tea of mountain herbs, dried fruits of the forests, bread of maize, rich milk, and honey.

He partook freely of all that was offered him, for he was very hungry, and the refreshments were of excellent quality.

When hunger was appeased, and he had seen that his faithful steed had been cared for, he was again conducted to the Queen's tent. She received him with an encouraging smile, and invited him to be seated upon a fur-covered stool near her.

"Now," she said to him, "tell me more about your

projects and your aims. Do you really care about the welfare of your fellow man? As far as I have seen of your world, and I have seen too much of it," she continued with a sad smile, "every one cares only for himself; tries to take all the advantage he can of his brother, by fair means or foul, in order to get possession of what he has without giving him an equivalent."

"And so it is," answered Livingston, "the struggle has become so general and intense, that the honest man, who is scrupulous, as to the manner in which he obtains the means of existence, has very little chance to remain honorable, and yet make a comfortable livelihood for himself and family. Then, this continual struggle is demoralizing. It claims every minute of time. He has nothing left scarcely for self-culture or for the development of the nobler attributes of humanity."

"Our traditionary principles are similar to yours," said the Queen: "Our religion is also a religion of brotherhood and of peace. To live as near our Father of the skies as possible, has always been the aim of all our people, and was also the constant aim of the great and noble Montezuma."

Livingston was astonished to hear the Queen speak thus. It was evident that she was not an ignorant woman; she had perhaps received some education, although he could not imagine how, and the mention of the name of the great Montezuma, greatly astonished him. Moreover, her English was good, and her use of words certainly denoted some reading.

"You are very tired," said the Queen. "A tent has been prepared for you. My attendants will lead you to it. May the Great Spirit of Peace grant you sound sleep. To-morrow we will speak further of that which brought you here."

Livingston was only too glad to comply and followed the attendants into a splendid tent, in which was a couch spread with white coverlets.

Lighting a lamp, they bowed respectfully and retired.

Although wearied, Livingston could not immediately fall asleep. The Queen and her tribe occupied his thoughts. Who was she? Who were they? They were not Indians, nor did they seem to belong to his own race. The Queen was clearly a woman of culture and refinement, and the principles of morality and brotherhood, which she enunciated, belonged to the most advanced religious thought. Thus pondering, at length he fell asleep, only to be aroused after a time by some strange noise. He listened attentively but failed to hear the sound again.

"I must have been dreaming," he said, as he tried to compose himself again to slumber.

After a while, he started up again, believing that he had heard loud singing. Listening once more, but in vain, he took an easy position for a long sleep, saying :

"My fatiguing journey has unsettled my nerves and aroused my imagination."

But now he distinctly heard something like music in the distance, and soon the voices of the singers, accompanying the music. The notes grew louder by degrees, swelling into a full voiced chorus, and chanting the most unearthly, yet at times weird and sweet strains, the tenor of which he could not determine.

He resolved to unravel the mystery, believing that some religious rite was being performed, in accordance with what the Queen had said of her people.

Dressing rapidly, he stepped out of his tent and noticed a glimmer of light at a distance. Advancing

carefully toward it, and, passing by the group of tents, he saw that they were all empty, though dim lights were burning in most of them. Arriving at the spot where the glimmer of light appeared, he saw the opening of a cave. Carefully scanning the entrance, and seeing that no one was on guard, he ventured some distance within, and discovered that the singing came from some interior chamber. Stepping forward, and keeping in shadow, he reached a point from which the whole ceremony was visible. He saw a place nearly dark, from which he could observe everything without being seen, and watching an opportunity, slipped into it unperceived.

The music was strange; though not discordant, it certainly did not seem harmonious; it produced on the nerves a singular impression. It was not pain, it was not pleasure; it was the effect of a certain kind of vibration, which seemed to drive all thoughts from the brain, and to leave him in a state of bewilderment.

And now each member of the tribe took up a piece of wood, which he seemed to have brought with him, and with a movement, which partook equally of the nature of walking and dancing, yet modulated to the music, advanced toward a large central fire, built upon a pile of rocks, and throwing the wood into the flames, stepped back a few paces and there remained in position. Soon a pleasant resinous odor filled the cave, and when each of the company in turn had done the same, a circle was formed around the base of the burning pile.

Just as the flames were leaping highest toward the roof, the Queen appeared. She was attired in a long, flowing, dark robe, low necked, with bare arms, and long dark hair hanging loose upon her shoulders. In her hand she carried a long, shining staff of metal, apparently of gold. At its end was a cup, filled with some inflammable

substance, for as she approached the fire, she dipped it into the flames when it was instantly ignited. Then taking a few steps backward, while the music grew louder, she thrice made the circuit of the fire with stately bearing and queenly grace.

Inclining her staff right and left, at every step, she let fall from it drops of some burning substance with the seeming purpose of communicating to all the influence of the sacred flame.

While she was thus engaged, the music had become slow and profound; the voices harmonious and impressive. Soon, however, the notes grew swifter, the voices louder, and the singers, forming a circle about the rocks, commenced to move rapidly to and fro. The Queen's motions were also accelerated; the music grew more exciting, wild and weird, though still impressive, and the movements and voices of the worshippers seemed governed by its cadences. And now the Queen, with closed eyes, began to glide slowly around the fire, her torch describing mysterious figures that were observed attentively by all, as if full of significance.

Livingston had become so interested that he had need of all his self-control to prevent him from leaving his hiding-place and joining in the dance, so strong was the magnetism radiating from the performers.

At this point the dancers took from a pile near by, bunches of herbs which they threw upon the fire. A few moments later, a strange pungent odor filled the cave. The excitement had grown so intense, the movements so rapid, and the singing so full of passion that Livingston was on the verge of losing his self-control, especially when he saw the Queen, with a lighted wand, describing lightning-like and magical figures in the air.

Each time she made a stroke, a sound accompanied it, like the falling of heavy sleet. The smoke grew darker above the sacred fire, and through it streaks of lightning appeared to shoot, while, sometimes, Livingston could see a hideous face appear in its murky folds, but only for an instant. After a few rapid gyrations the Queen became immobile as a statue. Her features were rigid as those of a cataleptic, and yet bearing the impress of intense hatred.

When the attendants saw her in this condition, they brought forth a couch on which they laid her gently. The torch was taken from her hand, and placed upright near her head.

After remaining motionless and trance-like for perhaps five minutes, the same repulsive expression distorting her features, the Queen, with a sudden start, stood erect. Her eyes shone with a strange and vivid light. Extending both hands toward some unseen object in space, she uttered in a harsh voice, and in tones betraying the intensity of her hatred, these startling words :

“ Queen, thou hast married the man I loved, the father of my child ; thou art the cause of my hopeless exile. Thou shalt die ! I command thee, by the power of this magic wand and the fiery figures it describes, to appear in person before this altar of flame. Queen, I command thee to appear ! ”

An immense black cloud gathered above the fire. All eyes were intently fixed upon it. The Aztec woman stood erect, like the living picture of a fury, in her eyes the gleam of hate, and in her uplifted hand the burning wand extended over the flames, while from her lips fell strange and dreadful invocations.

“ Queen, I command thee to appear ! ” she repeated. Instantly, a rumbling sound was heard, as of distant

thunder. Blinding flashes of lightning shot through the dark cloud; an awful crash, directly overhead, made the arched vault of the cave tremble, paralyzing all present, including the Aztec Queen. The black cloud became brilliantly illuminated, and a beautiful human being appeared, shining like the sun, and attired in a long snow-white robe. Extending both hands toward the frightened woman, he said in a stern voice:

“Thou unworthy descendant of the great Montezuma, I command thee to withdraw thy hateful influence from Queen Dolora. If again thou dost invoke the destructive fires of thy black magic, its flames shall consume thee! Be warned!”

The vision disappeared. The Queen and the members of the tribe seemed unable to move; they looked as if completely stunned, their senses overcome by fear.

Livingston, bewildered, and afraid of being detected, left the cave at a propitious moment, and returned to his tent. He slept the remainder of the night; but what a sleep! what dreams! what visions! His brain was on fire. Still, toward morning a calm and peaceful slumber came to him, quieting his nerves and giving to them new tone and strength.

The next morning, as he stepped out of his tent, one of the Queen's attendants, who seemed to be in waiting for him, invited him to the same tent where he had taken supper on the night before. He found a tempting breakfast spread for him, composed of eatables similar to those of which he had already partaken, except that his beverage tasted like a mixture of coffee and chocolate, but much more palatable than either.

After eating, he strolled around the camp for a few minutes, but everybody seemed as yet asleep.

The door of the Queen's tent was closed, and watched by four armed attendants.

"No wonder that they sleep," he said to himself, "for they have done some very exhaustive work during the night." Hearing the neigh of his horse, he turned around and saw that he was browsing on the tender grass, which covered, as with a robe of emerald, the site of the Aztec camp.

"Well, Sultan," said his master, "we will take a ride about the neighborhood and see what it looks like. As for the climate, though it is mid-winter and the snow wraps all the East in its shroud, here we have all round us the delicate flowers of spring."

He saddled his steed, and turned toward the south, along the banks of a stream whose waters were rolling over a rocky bed, forming here and there small cataracts.

Following the windings of the stream, he pursued his way along a deer path, though with some trouble, owing to the closeness of the gigantic pine trees, which were often more than thirty feet in circumference. This monstrous growth drew from him repeated exclamations of wonder. Now and then his horse started at the sudden rise of immense flocks of wild pigeons.

After many vain attempts to find the open country, Livingston turned his horse, and placing the reins over the pommel of the saddle, left the animal to find his way back. He was soon absorbed in his habitual musings about colonization and co-operation, though frequently reverting to his experiences of the night before.

What were those strange religious ceremonies? What significance had they? Was he sure that they were religious? The death-like figure of the Queen, the positive expression of deep hatred which distorted her fea-

tures, her dance with the wand, the mysterious figures she described with it, all seemed to belong more to witchcraft than to worship.

"Well, well," he said, "perhaps before I leave I shall discover the key to all these mysteries. Meanwhile, my dear Sultan, quicken your gait, for I am hungry, and so must you be; for we have wandered about for many hours and the evening shadows are lengthening." Urging on his horse by gently shaking the reins, they sped toward the mysterious camp. When within a stone's throw of the first tent, the Queen herself stepped forward, with a pleasant smile, and again bade him welcome.

Livingston dismounted. An attendant took charge of his horse, and the Queen, while asking him for the details of his journey, led him toward her own tent.

There he found to his great astonishment, a table handsomely set with fine linen and flowers, silver forks and knives.

"Perhaps," said the Queen, answering the mental question which she had read in his looks, "perhaps all this will be explained to you one day, if you remain long enough with us to gain our confidence. Meanwhile, be seated and try to appease your hunger with the frugal diet of the wild-wood people."

Saying this, she looked at her visitor with a feeling of satisfaction, noticing his smile and the incredulous shake of his head at what she termed "wild-wood people."

The Queen having taken a seat, Livingston, at her bidding, sat down also, and ate as heartily as he had ever done at the most luxurious of city banquets.

"So," said the Queen, when his appetite was a little appeased, "you have discovered but rocky hills and stony

flats in your journey to-day and have found no desirable place for the location of your ideal colony?"

"No," he replied, "and I had it in mind to ask you, if there are no valleys in this region suitable for colonization? You people must know this country well."

"You are greatly mistaken in your supposition, Mr. Livingston, however natural it may be. The truth is, my people are not nomadic in their habits. They do not wander far and wide on hunting expeditions, for they no longer eat meat nor kill."

Livingston looked at her in astonishment. "I have noticed," he said, "that you never have meat on your table."

"No," continued the Queen; "it has been transmitted to us by the great Montezuma, that every living thing in the Universe has a right to exist, and has a place given to it by the Great Spirit, and that this place can be filled only by that being, without whose existence there would be a link missing in the great chain of life."

Livingston regarded her intently.

"Yes," she continued, "and our sacred tablets, cut in stone, state that eating the flesh of animals communicates all the peculiarities, habits, and propensities of the animal to those who do so. And whereas it is the duty and destiny of man to emancipate himself by all possible means from the animal which is yet in him, so as to rise toward the Great Spirit, therefore must he abstain from eating flesh, and so clear away one of the obstructions to his higher development."

"Where, might I ask, did you learn this, Madame?" asked Livingston, excitedly.

"Our wise men obtained it from the Great Spirit, in their sacred temples, away yonder," she said, pointing toward the south.

"Then your tribe has been larger than it now is, and lived far in the south?"

"Yes, the remains of its sacred temples exist in many places yet; their inscriptions are cut in the walls and are visible to-day; but the barbarians, who vanquished us and killed our wise men for the gold in the temples, cannot decipher or understand those inscriptions, and never will. God forbid! For if they did, they might acquire the terrible powers our wise men possessed, the secrets of which are carved in mysterious figures upon the walls of the temples, together with the suns, moons, and stars, indicating the state of the planets, when the powers can be successfully exercised. Happily those barbarians are too busily engaged accumulating gold, to waste time (as they think) in deciphering these figures on the walls of our ruined temples."

"But who are those barbarians who live toward the south? I do not know of any. There is Mexico, then the Central and South American States."

"Yes, yes," said the Queen much excited. "The Spaniards, the Spaniards—who—who—Now tell me," she added in a whisper, bending her beautiful form over the table toward her visitor, "tell me whom you love the best on earth, whose death would cause you the greatest sorrow."

"Why?" asked Livingston in astonishment.

"Tell me, tell me," she repeated.

"Well, my daughter Olga, my dear Olga."

"Then, swear to me by the life of your dear child Olga, that you will never reveal without my permission, what I am about to confide to you. Swear," she said, with the air of one accustomed to command.

"I swear," answered Livingston, now under the influence of her personal magnetism.

"Then know that I am the Queen of the last remnant of the Aztecs, a descendant in direct line of the Montezumas. The descendants of my people, now scattered in many lands, by right should have dominion over the greater part of this continent. My people lived happily; for ours was the true, real, universal brotherhood. The Montezumas taught that all men are children of the Great Spirit, and that all must return to their Father, and become one with him. Guided by their teachings, they endeavored to discover the special abode of the Great Spirit, as also what pleased him most, and they succeeded."

"And where did they find it?" asked Livingston.

"They found," said the Queen, "that he lives in the sacred fire kindled by himself on the sacred altar. As long as the sacred fire is cherished by daily worship and offerings, the great spirit remains there. When our sacred fires were burning every where, Montezuma, surrounded by his twelve wise men, was in daily communication with the Great Spirit, and through him was enabled to perform miracles and wonders. Well, all my ancestors lived happily and near to their Great Father, when the Spaniards came. They were received as brothers, according to our doctrine, but seeing the many golden vases and utensils which my ancestors used as common metal for cooking, and other purposes, these foreigners began to rob us, then to fight, kill, and drive us away. The noble Montezuma and his people knew not how to fight, would not, even if they did know; and so they were destroyed, tribe after tribe, until to-day but few exist. But the Montezumas before fleeing, put the bulk of their gold vases and utensils in a deep cave, in almost inaccessible mountains, where no Spaniard could ever find them,—treasures that shall be used for their

overthrow, and for the restoration to Montezuma's descendants of their rightful heritage.

"Yes," she continued with pious horror, "those sacrilegious barbarians desecrated the temples where our holy mysteries were performed, and then despoiled them, for the sake of the metal of their sacred vessels. They cruelly slaughtered, in the very temple of the great spirit, our venerable priests and sages, who had hidden the precious utensils beneath the rocky altar, striving to preserve them. But some of our great seers had saved a portion of the materials with which our rites are celebrated, and assembling the dispersed brethren, met together in a cave, drew forth the potencies of the eternal fire, and then hurled a lasting curse, the worst known in all the mysteries, against the Spaniards. Since that time their power has waned and will continue to wane until it becomes utterly extinct."

"But is it not stated in the laws of magic that when the power conferred by the mysteries on the priesthood is used for evil, for cursing, the curses will recoil upon those who utter them? and——"

"Stop! stop!" ejaculated the Queen. Straightening herself to her full height, she stretched her hand toward Livingston to check his words. "Stop!" and rising abruptly from the table, pale and distressed, she quickly regained her tent, the entrance of which was closed behind her, two armed attendants standing outside on guard.

Livingston was sorely perplexed.

"Where am I?" he asked of himself. "Who are these people and who is this Queen? Are they really the last of the remaining tribes of the once powerful and civilized Aztecs, and is this Queen indeed a direct de-

scendant of the great Montezuma, or is she only a deluded visionary ?”

He also returned to his tent, and throwing himself on his couch, gave way to reflection. He compared her philanthropic utterances and professions of universal brotherhood with the weird and wrathful ceremonies he had witnessed in the cave. How did all that beautiful table linen and silverware come into their possession? She certainly could not have inherited them from the Montezumas, for they were all of modern design and manufacture. The Queen spoke like a woman who had seen other lands than this remote and unpeopled solitude, and her presence here was shrouded in mystery, in fact everything was mysterious.

Thus soliloquizing he sank into a profound sleep, murmuring as he did so :

“ However strange and eccentric the Queen may be, I cannot think that she is a wicked woman.”

The next day, after breakfast, which was brought to his tent, the Queen still remaining secluded, Livingston mounted his horse, proceeding this time toward the ocean, distant about seven miles to the westward.

Finding his way as best he could ; following deer and goat tracks, barely escaping with life and limb, while brushing past pine trees, under overhanging boughs and brambles, climbing over steep rocky ridges, and fording rapid streams, he sighted at last the Pacific.

Lifting his hat, with a reverential salute, he said :

“ Hail to thee, King of Waters ! Thy limitless expanse proclaims thee child of the Infinite ! Thy fresh and pure breezes give new vigor to my frame. In the deep murmur of thy blue waves upon the pebbly beach, I recognize thy anthem to the Great Spirit that made and pervades thee ! O ! majestic ocean, full of immeasurable

potencies, mayest thou be forever kind and gentle to the human souls who commit themselves to thy bosom, seeking in foreign lands the peace and liberty denied them by the tyrants and bigots of their own ! ”

“ Amen,” answered a deep voice near him.

Livingston started and looking round saw, coming toward him with outstretched hands, a white bearded, brown robed Padre, a bright and affectionate smile beaming on his countenance.

“ Amen,” he said again, grasping Livingston’s hand, “ this is the truest and most spontaneous prayer I have heard for a long time. I say ‘ amen ’ to it from the bottom of my heart, and I come to take your hand, my brother. Such a noble appeal, even if it be to an ocean of water, could emanate only from a pure and noble heart.”

Livingston absently gave the Padre his hand, while he stared him in the face in blank amazement, unable to utter a word, so intense was his surprise.

“ Who are you ? What do you here ? And have you dropped from heaven on this spot ? ” asked the good priest, with rapid utterance.

These questions, put one after the other with great earnestness, brought Livingston to himself again, and smiling, he heartily returned the pressure of the Padre’s hand.

“ I can hardly answer so many questions at once, my good Padre, but, as you see, I have come here with the aid of my faithful friend, Sultan. What I am doing here, I hardly know. My name is Livingston, and I am an American by birth, no less than by preference, and your very humble servant, my good father. But who are you ? ”

“ I am the Padre in charge of El Carmelo Mission,

distant a few miles hence on Carmelo Bay, near the ocean."

"When did you come here and whence?"

"I came direct from Belgium, ten years ago, and——"

"From Belgium?" exclaimed Livingston excitedly, "the country where my dearly beloved daughter Olga is being educated."

"Is it possible?" ejaculated the Padre, in his turn becoming excited. "Have you ever been in Belgium yourself?"

"Certainly, I have traveled through it, have visited Brussels, and my daughter is now at Liège, a pupil in the seminary of the Countess de Bellevue."

"Well! well!!" exclaimed the good Padre with an expression of joy. "I am a native of Liège myself, and am personally acquainted with the noble lady de Bellevue. You could not have placed your daughter in better hands. But what brought you to this coast, and especially to this part of it?"

"My mission here is in the cause of humanity, and has for its object the welfare of my brethren."

"Well, Mr. Livingston, I am more than delighted to have met you, and you must promise to come and see me at El Carmelo; we will talk together, and whatever your mission, if you see fit to communicate the particulars to me, I shall gladly render you all the assistance in my power. I must now leave you, for my Indian attendants are waiting for me, in yonder cañon, and we must return home. Will you kindly pay me a visit?"

"Most assuredly I will, and apart from the pleasure of the visit, you can give me some valuable information, which so far I have been unable to obtain, concerning this part of the country."

"Good-bye then, and the Lord be with you!"

"Good-bye, and may you have a safe return."

When the Padre disappeared, Livingston could hardly realize his own identity.

"I scarcely know," he muttered to himself, "whether I am yet in the flesh, or have become a disembodied being and am living in dreamland. If I am really in the flesh, as a growing appetite seems to affirm, I must confess that this country affords a continual relay of surprises. I wonder what will happen next? That Padre interests me very much. He is so bright, so open-hearted and simple. He is really a man of God by innate worth; a Belgian too; and moreover acquainted with Madame de Bellevue. Why, it is stranger than fiction!" He mounted Sultan, and set out on his journey homeward.

It was almost dark when Livingston reached the camp. His arrival was announced to the Queen, and leaving her tent, she made a signal with her hand, and immediately two of her attendants began to play on the "marimba," the ancient musical instrument of the Aztecs.

"What does that mean?" wondered Livingston, as he delivered Sultan to the care of an attendant.

As soon as the mellow tones of the instrument were heard, the members of the tribe left their lodges, and arrayed themselves in rank in front of the Queen. When all were in line, a march was sounded, and the procession moved in the direction of the sacred cave of worship. As the Queen passed near Livingston, she said to him:

"Follow!"

"I wonder," he mused, "if there is to be another performance of black magic in that cave! If so I do not care to be present."

The procession entered the cave. One of the Queen's attendants directed him to a seat, and with apparent resignation, he awaited the turn of events.

The marimba now gave forth soft and subdued strains, and the Queen, having retired to some secret recess, presently reappeared, dressed in long white robes.

Then followed the ceremony of feeding the sacred fire of Montezuma, and one of the sticks or chips of wood being given to Livingston, he added his mite to this blazing emblem of Aztec worship.

.As the flames rose to the arched roof, a beautiful hymn was sung by the assembled votaries, the Queen leading, in a rich, well-trained voice, with modulations mellow and tender. This impressive symphony seemed to be an invocation to the great spirit for protection, and her noble figure appeared to dilate when extending her arms, as if to cover and shield her children. The song ended and the worshipers marched around the sacred altar, gesticulating with their arms, while their bodies swayed in undulating motion. This ceremony lasted for some minutes, when the marimba was again heard. Its tones, accompanied by a low, plaintive murmur of choral voices, were softly imploring.

Never had Livingston heard such music. It was like waves of weird but harmonious vibrations, which though wordless, calmed and soothed the senses, lulling them almost to slumber. The visitor felt the spell gradually stealing over him, and only by great effort, was able to resist its influence.

The Queen, erect, beautiful, and majestic in her white flowing robes, had closed her eyes. Her features were immobile and statue-like. Soon her lips moved, and in a grave and sonorous voice, she spoke.

Livingston listened attentively to every word, but not

a syllable could he understand. The language was one which he had never heard before. The members of the tribe, however, seemed familiar with it; for from time to time they nodded assent to her remarks. Her words were few, and when she had concluded, all present went in turn to Livingston, and making low salutation, kissed his hand with marks of profound respect. Then the Queen, with eyes still closed, directed her steps straight toward him, and laying her hands upon his head, spoke thus:

“The great Montezuma commands that all the privileges enjoyed by the member of his tribe be conferred upon thee, knowing that thou art worthy. Thy aims and ideals are lofty, and henceforward our life-work and our destinies will run together. May the great Montezuma, love and protect thee, for now, in the presence of this sacred fire (here she handed to him a burning brand) and under its shielding influence, thou hast become a child of Montezuma and one of us.”

Having thus said she opened her eyes. Directing their steps to the sacred fire, each member took therefrom a burning brand, and in turn approaching Livingston, described above his head a mysterious figure, replacing the flaming symbol on the altar.

During the commencement of these impressive rites, Livingston could not refrain from smiling at the dubious honor thus conferred; but an inexplicable feeling took possession of him, as he felt a subtle and mysterious influence steadily creeping over him, soothing and uplifting, though almost intoxicating in its effect. It caused him actually to realize that he was the recipient of a great favor. Advancing mechanically toward the Queen, he knelt before her, exclaiming in accents of devotion:

"Henceforth thou art my Queen, and these shall be my brethren."

As he kissed her hand, she smiled upon him, proud of his homage.

"Dost thou swear," said she solemnly, holding up her hand, "to keep inviolate the secrets of my people?"

"I do so swear," he said in an equally solemn manner.

Thereupon the Queen led him in turn to each member of the tribe, every one grasping his hand in brotherly love.

The ceremony was now ended; the procession formed again, and at the invitation of the Queen, Livingston walked by her side at its head.

Arriving at her lodge, she dismissed the people, and invited her companion to enter.

The attendants set before them a sumptuous repast, and when they were seated the Queen began the conversation, saying:

"Now that you have become one of us, Mr. Livingston, let us refer to your mission on this coast, for henceforth whatever interests you interests me, and in fact all my people. You mentioned that your intention was to introduce a colony here, or wherever you might find a favorable location. Please give me some details of your purpose, or rather state the leading features of your proposed colony. I and my tribe will then be able to determine whether they harmonize with those principles of universal brotherhood, as taught by the great Montezuma, and practiced by us to this day."

"Most cheerfully will I do so, my Queen, for I am sure that they cannot fail to agree with the principles you refer to. *First, we consider that every man born into this world has an absolute right to exist in it.*"

"That is incontestable."

"Secondly, if he has a right to exist, we assert that he has also a right to such conditions of existence as are most propitious to the healthy development of his whole being."

"True."

"Thirdly, man is essentially an intellectual being. To comprehend the purpose of his existence and to conform himself to the laws of his destiny, must constitute the aim and duty of his life."

"Exactly."

"Fourthly, to be able to do this, man must be materially independent. We assert that it is only by having the means of his material existence assured, that he will ever become absolutely free; be enabled to develop all his best faculties, and arrive at that type of true manhood which, by following a course of life in strict harmony with high aspirations and a noble belief in harmony too with the universality of beings and things, will finally reach the loftiest elevation of which humanity is capable. This material independence is, and has always been, the supreme thought of every human soul, and all my efforts, and those of my friends, are directed to the formation of a state of society in which this ideal can be realized."

"Yes," answered the Queen, much impressed by this exposition of her visitor's creed; "it is said in the sacred books of our wise men, that a brother cannot worship the Great Spirit, when he is hungry, or cold, or sick."

"And your sacred books are right. We have no wish to reform society as it actually is; it would be a hopeless task; it is too much dominated by the spirit of evil, by selfishness, greed, and the black beast, materialism. These are in full possession, and it would be a waste of

effort to attempt to dislodge them. We have decided to try new fields, with new and harmonious elements, the only scheme that seems to promise any chance of success. This brought me to the coast of California, where I hoped to find conditions congenial to human life. So far I have not been successful, but I intend to visit the mission of El Carmelo, and consult the Padre whom I met this morning near the ocean. He must know well the surrounding country."

"The Padre you met this morning near the ocean?" repeated the Queen with a meaning look in her eyes.

"Yes, dear Queen, in my morning's wandering I had reached the top of a ridge, whence was a view of the coast and the Pacific Ocean, the most beautiful marine landscape the eye of man ever rested upon. Inspired by the majestic scenery, I offered up a humble prayer to the father of the great waters, when a voice answered 'Amen.' You can realize how much I was amazed. The voice was that of the Padre, who came to me with hands outstretched. We shook hands, and I soon learned that he was a native of the same European country where my beloved daughter and only child, Olga, is receiving her education."

"And what country is that?" asked the Queen much interested.

"A veritable garden spot, called Belgium."

"Belgium!" ejaculated the Queen, suddenly rising with a nervous start, which nearly overturned the table. She stood trembling, with pallid features, and a wild and startled look.

"Do you say that your daughter is in Belgium?"

"What is there in that to cause you such agitation?" ejaculated Livingston, moving back from the table almost in fear.

The Queen resumed her seat, and burying her face in her hands, burst into tears.

After some minutes of bitter weeping, the dejected woman said, in accents interrupted by sobs :

“ You have opened one of the most painful wounds in my heart, Mr. Livingston. These deep and sudden emotions must doubtless appear strange to you, but that word Belgium is like a dagger in my breast. May the Great Spirit grant me speedy relief from my suffering ! ”

“ I confess, dear Queen, that I cannot comprehend how the word Belgium can so deeply affect you. Why should you weep so bitterly, and implore the Great Spirit to bring your existence to an end ? ” The woman's tears unmanned him. “ Be of good cheer,” he said. “ You must take life more in earnest. Have you nothing for which to live ? ”

“ Yes ! ” she exclaimed in a frantic voice, and starting up like a roused lioness, “ Yes ! I will live ! I will live for my child ! ”

“ Yes,” she continued, “ I must find my child, and you must help me, being one of us, and when I have found my boy, I will reveal to him the key to the hieroglyphics of the Montezumas, by which the secret location of treasures concealed in caves is minutely described. He must help me to restore the prestige of our tribe, and. . . and he must avenge me ! ” she cried with a wild burning light glittering in her eyes.

“ She is surely crazed ! ” thought the American.

“ Mr. Livingston,” she proceeded, in firm but calm accents, “ I read in the expression of your eyes, that you think I have lost my senses. I confess that my actions must appear to be those of one demented. But there is a mystery behind this excitement, and since you have sworn not to reveal the secrets of the tribe, and further-

more since I know, from the explanation which you gave me of your humanitarian principles, that you are a man of the highest honor, I will disclose to you this secret, the betrayal of which would be your destruction."

While the Queen endeavored to suppress her agitation, her visitor supposed that he was about to hear the narrative of some piteous and dramatic incident of her earlier days, and prepared himself to listen attentively.

Stepping to the entrance of her lodge, she gave strict orders to her guards to admit no one, enjoining them not to disturb her under any pretext whatsoever.

"Now listen!" she said, and regarding Livingston with steady gaze, related the following story of her life:

"Years, many years ago, in the prime of youth, full of enthusiasm and faith, I had just finished the study of the sacred books transmitted to us by our forefathers, and had carefully committed to memory, the secret instructions depicted in hieroglyphics, designed by the great Montezuma for the exclusive use of his direct descendants and the rulers of the Aztec people. Within me I felt the sacred fire burning, and impelling me to make some efforts to rescue my people from their helpless and abject condition; to restore to them, if possible, the prestige of their ancestors; to give them, in fact, a country of their own, where they might establish once more, the true religion of universal brotherhood, and cultivate the arts and sciences in which their forefathers excelled; for you are of course aware that the Aztec nation was far advanced in astronomy and kindred sciences."

"Yes, I have read somewhat of the history of that ancient people, but if I remember rightly, it was astrology that they professed mainly."

"Astrology, sir, is the soul of astronomy. The latter

denotes the positions, distances, and volumes of the astral bodies, while astrology does more than this; it notes the influence that each particular star exercises upon its neighbors. But be that as it may, it is nevertheless true that my ancestors had an intimate and positive knowledge of many things which are but as so much lost and forgotten lore. With full life, vigor, and ambition, and after having consulted the oracle of the sacred fire on the most propitious day—the day when favorable stars were in conjunction—I determined to try and restore the Aztec nation to its former rank and prosperity. We had treasures without end at our disposal; caves full of gold vases and golden slabs, the pavements of our ancient palaces. After much reflection and deliberation with the wise men of my people, I concluded to go to Europe, and endeavor to interest some monarch in our cause, offering as a reward for our restoration, millions from our almost inexhaustible supply of wealth.

“Having made this decision, I traveled over great waters, accompanied by two of our wise men. There was no difficulty in gaining audience with the crowned heads of Europe, but after listening to my story, some of them graciously smiled and complimented me upon the pure blood of the Montezumas which ran in my veins; others, less intelligent perhaps, thought me half demented. Finally, I was introduced at the court of the king of a small nation. I found in him as I thought a true gentleman; he received me with much deference, listened to my story with marked attention, and told me that he would do all in his power to aid me in so grand and noble a design.

“‘Meanwhile it behooves a queen,’ he said, ‘to have quarters in the palace.’ Orders were accordingly given

to that effect, and I was conducted to a suite of rooms, the elegance of which was dazzling. For the first time in my life, I found myself treated in Europe as a queen and lodged in the palace of a king."

Livingston had been deeply interested in her story. It was evident that she was speaking the truth; and he began to see a reason for all her strange conduct during the past few days.

"The King," she continued, "who was a handsome young man and unmarried, daily sent an officer of his body-guard, craving an audience, which I always granted with the utmost pleasure. I was invited to dine with him and was introduced to many high personages. One evening, his Majesty asked me to an informal meeting in his private apartments, that we might consult together upon the object of my mission. I eagerly accepted his proposition, and at the appointed hour presented myself before him.

"No other guest had been invited. Luscious wines were poured into fragile goblets, challenging the taste and stimulating the appetite. As we quaffed the delicious wines the monarch pressed his suit upon me. 'O!' he exclaimed, 'how happy will be the man whom you bless with your love and make happy as his wife!'

"He took my hand and pressed it. My head fell upon his shoulder, and for two years we loved. I loved him with all the frenzy of an Aztec woman, and the proud confidence of an equal.

"My mission was forgotten during this ecstasy of human passion. The wise men who had accompanied me returned heart-broken to my people. I became a mother! The mother of a noble, beautiful boy!"

Here, the unhappy woman broke down, sobbing con-

vulsively. Livingston was moved with intense sympathy. The disclosure stunned him.

"Soon after the birth of my child, it was rumored that my royal consort—for such he was—was about to take in marriage the daughter of a neighboring king. Imagine the blow! At first I laughed at the idea, too confident, alas! But one morning appeared the official announcement of this coming marriage!

"I rushed into his presence. Of what transpired I have but a faint remembrance. I know that I placed his life in jeopardy, and that I was forcibly carried to my apartments in a swoon.

"For many days I nursed my grief in solitude, fondling the dear offspring of my love. One morning, having sent the nurse with my child into the palace grounds to let him breathe the invigorating air, I was surprised by the entrance of an officer of the King's body-guard. He was the bearer of a message from his Majesty, demanding an interview. Noticing my abject condition, with winning persistence he pressed me to take a glass of wine, which he poured from a decanter on the sideboard.

"'It will nerve you,' he said, 'and give you, dear lady, control and power during the trying interview.'

"I drank. . . . and almost in an instant became unconscious! When I recovered my senses, I found myself on the deep waters of the wide ocean and without my child!—bound, as the captain of the vessel told me, to the coast of California!

"And here I am," exclaimed the broken-hearted Queen, "continually stung by the consciousness of my fatal weakness—and bereft of my child! He still lives, I doubt not, the scion of a European monarch and an Aztec queen."

Livingston could not utter a word. Half conscious,

he gazed with blank expression on the lovely but dejected woman before him.

Mistaking perhaps the significance of his vacant look, the Queen arose, and taking from a recess a golden casket, opened it by touching a secret spring.

"Read this," she said, "and convince yourself of the truth of my sad story. These letters are written in the English language."

While Livingston perused the documents, the unhappy woman gave way to a flood of tears.

As word by word he scanned with care the papers, an overwhelming sense of the truthfulness of the Queen's story took possession of him. Rising from his seat, radiant with the dignity of manhood, he approached her, and grasping her hands, exclaimed :

"Madame ! You are the victim of an outrageous and villainous plot. I will make every effort to find for you your lost child. It is my intention to return to Belgium, to meet my daughter Olga and bring her back with me, and while in Europe I shall aid you to the best of my power."

Pressing the hand of the Queen with a grasp of sincere affection, he added : "You may rely on my sincerity and firm resolve."

The next day Livingston rode toward the Mission El Carmelo, where groups of Indians were cultivating the fields and vineyards, and all seemed peaceful and content. As he neared the buildings, he saw approaching him, again with outstretched hands, the good Padre who had saluted him with a sonorous Amen, after his prayer upon the coast.

"Dear Padre," said Livingston, "I have come to pay you a visit ; but it has a double purpose. I also

come to ask if you know of any vessel going to Europe, and when it will sail."

"Very welcome are you, and most glad I am to see you," answered the Padre. "There is but one vessel on this coast at present, bound for Europe, and it will call for me shortly, for I am ordered to Belgium for missionary work."

"Is it really possible? This is good fortune indeed! When do you expect the vessel?"

"In about a week."

"Must you go to the Presidio of San Francisco to embark?"

"No. The vessel will call at this mission, and a boat will come for me. If you intend to leave for Europe, I would advise you to profit by the opportunity, for God knows when another ship will sail hence direct to the continent. I would be most glad indeed to have you for a traveling companion."

"Thanks, good Padre. I will avail myself of the opportunity, and with your leave I will return to the mission in a day or two, to remain until the vessel arrives."

"Most welcome to remain with us as long as you please. We will thus be enabled to make you thoroughly acquainted with the work of our missions here, and let you judge of the good we do to our Indian brethren. A true report prepared by you as to the civilizing influence of the California missions, may thus reach the people of Europe."

"Dear Padre, you may expect me soon," said Livingston, while taking an affectionate leave of the priest; "I must return at once."

Livingston related to the Queen the result of his visit. She listened attentively to every word, but unable to

suppress an occasional sigh, entered her tent, and closed the curtains.

The next day, Livingston saw but little of the Queen, and as he was about to leave on the following morning, begged for an interview. He knew full well how deeply she regretted his departure, but his presence was required in Europe, and he had fully resolved on the voyage, as arranged with the Padre. The Queen returned answer that she would see him on the morrow.

Livingston passed a sleepless night, as did the Queen. When the sun had risen above the mountains, she sent for her guest, inviting him to the breakfast table.

On entering her tent, he was astonished to see there a handsome woman in fashionable European attire, sitting at the head of the well furnished board. Rising, she greeted him with a graceful bow, begging him to be seated near her, at a place which she indicated.

"Yes, it is I, Mr. Livingston," she said, extending her hand to him as she observed his confusion; "I have resolved to accompany you to Europe, and to commence an earnest search for my son. Your presence here has re-opened all my wounds, and aroused anew a mother's yearnings. I feel that I must either find my child or die."

For the moment it seemed to him as a dream, but there stood the Queen before him with extended hand. He could doubt no longer.

"Look," she said, raising the lid of a chest. "With the contents of this, we shall leave no stone unturned to find my boy. May the great Montezuma grant that he be still alive. In fact," she exclaimed with uplifted eyes, as one half inspired, "in fact—I know he is."

Her guest saw with amazement that the chest was filled with gold and gems.

"Yes," he replied, with a smile, "there is wealth enough to purchase half a kingdom."

"The riches of the Montezumas are still unbounded," she added, "and this is but a trifle if more is needed."

Livingston was overcome. He knew that nothing would prevent the Queen from sailing for Europe. Her errand was a noble one, the prompting of maternal instincts. A week later they were sailing toward the south over the waters of the Pacific, and slowly faded from their view the shores of California.

CHAPTER XI.

THE salons of the Countess de Bellevue are brilliantly illuminated. Exotic plants shed their perfume in hall and corridor; flowers in profusion deck the walls; the chandeliers are covered with wreaths, and the air is loaded with fragrance. Carriages, with the crests of nobility emblazoned on their panels, succeed each other at the entrance, while liveried lackeys bow, as ladies, attired in splendid costumes, are escorted to the reception-room.

Around Madame de Bellevue are grouped some of her older pupils, a very garland of loveliness. Her dress is simple; but the rich black silk, enveloping her stately form, is cut in the latest court fashion.

Guest after guest appears before her, receiving her cordial greeting. The salons are thronged with friends, and throughout the apartments is heard the subdued murmur of conversation.

Presently a hush falls, as the governor of the province of Liège is announced, attended by his staff. Having paid his compliments to Madame de Bellevue with the courteous grace of a high-bred gentleman, his presence causes no restraint upon the enjoyment of the company.

A concert commences and some of the greatest artists of Belgium are announced on the programme. The name of Trouvère appears but once and that at the very end. It reads: "Improvisation on the violin by Monsieur Trouvère."

Generous and well merited applause was given to all the performers. When the programme was concluded, save for the last number and just before Trouvère's appearance was expected, a gentle drum-call was heard. All the guests present were respectfully requested to proceed to the grand salon, where the Countess de Bellevue wished to address a few words to them. Some were astonished at this strange procedure, while others smiled knowingly, as if aware of what was about to happen.

The Countess de Bellevue was sitting upon an elevated platform, erected at the end of her grand salon. Immediately on her right sat the governor of the province, and the burgomaster of the city of Liège; next to them was the military commander with his brilliant staff. The chair immediately on her left was vacant, and by its side were seated Archbishop Angelo, and the Bishop of Liège, with two of the higher members of the city's clergy.

All these dignitaries occupied seats placed in a semi-circle, the central figure of which was the Countess de Bellevue.

When the officials had taken their places, and all the guests were seated, the gentle drum-call was sounded again, and in a sonorous voice the major-domo of the Countess announced the entrance of the Count de Fays du Monceau, staff officer of his Majesty, the King of the Belgians.

The noble gentleman, in grand uniform, with ringing spurs and clanging saber, mounted the platform, and paid his respects to the Countess. In his hand was a sheet of parchment and attached to it a large seal of wax.

Another tap of the drum, and the major-domo called in stentorian tones:

“Trouvère ! Trouvère ! Trouvère !”

The artist could not understand the meaning of all this ceremony. As he stepped forward, the governor met him on the edge of the platform, and led him, mute with astonishment, to the Countess, who, rising, took the young man by the hand, and with a voice full of emotion, introduced him to the messenger of the King, saying :

“ This young gentleman is Trouvère.”

Again the drum sounded, and all the guests arose.

The officer of the King then proceeded to unfold the scroll of parchment and read as follows :

“I, Leopold the First, King of the Belgians, upon the petition of Adelaide, Countess de Bellevue, do by this special act declare Monsieur Trouvère to be the rightful heir to the title Count de Bellevue, which he will assume after the death of said Adelaide, the present Countess de Bellevue. It is further enacted that henceforth the name of said Trouvère, until he assumes the title of Count, shall be ‘Trouvère de Bellevue !’

“ LEOPOLD.”

Another roll-call on the drum, during which the officer handed to Trouvère the royal parchment.

Tears filled the young man’s eyes, and pale with emotion he approached the Countess, knelt at her feet, and covered her hands with kisses.

A storm of applause rose from the audience and many eyes were dimmed. The Countess herself wept, but her tears were tears of joy.

Olga was a silent witness of the scene. Not a motion, not an effort at applause did she make. Intensely pale, her large blue eyes, wide open, fixed upon Trouvère and the Countess, she sat like a statue. Her interest in the scene was so intense as to throw her almost into a state of unconsciousness.

When the applause had subsided, and Trouvére had risen, the governor of the province addressed him :

"Monsieur Trouvére de Bellevue, I congratulate you upon the favor that his Majesty the King, at the request of our noble and respected friend the Countess de Bellevue, has seen fit to bestow upon you. This favor carries a great responsibility, for the title, which you will eventually inherit, is bestowed by the most noble and charitable lady in the land. Your residence in our midst, since you were crowned laureate of the Conservatory of Music, has shown that you are a gentleman in the highest sense of the word, and during that time you have won the respect and sympathy of the best and noblest members of the society of Liège. Again, accept my congratulations."

During this speech, Trouvére's eyes had wandered through the audience, and though listening attentively and respectfully to every word that was said, a careful observer could not have failed to notice that he was trying to discover someone. At last, when the applause burst forth at the end of the speech his eyes met Olga's. From that instant her abstraction left her ; a crimson glow mantled her cheeks, as also those of Trouvére, and raising her shapely hands she joined in the applause. Trouvére's heart thoughts went out to her, and his eyes told her so. She understood him well, and the two lovers felt themselves the happiest mortals on earth.

And now the venerable director of the Conservatory stepped forward, and addressed his former pupil :

"Trouvére, in the name of art, I congratulate you. It is the artist and the man that are here rewarded. You have understood, ever since I have known you, that the violinist may be an excellent instrumentalist, perform-

ing mechanical wonders, and yet remain merely a violinist. You, Trouvère de Bellevue, have realized that the artist is the child of the soul. Often have I seen you admiring the flowers in the field, listening to the singing of the birds, and trying to understand the whisperings of the breeze. At Ostend I have watched you gazing for hours on the limitless ocean, as if magnetized by its immensity, studying the tones of the billows breaking on the sandy beach. Many nights have I seen you stretched upon the sward with face upturned to the stars of heaven. You seemed to interrogate them, asking whence they derived the harmonies which they conveyed to your soul. In that boundless space, you appeared to search for the abode of the Creator of this vast Universe, the great Father; and when filled with admiration and awe at the illuminated heavens, with tears in your eyes, and heart swelling with feelings of thankfulness and adoration, you returned alone to your room, and translated on your violin the exalted ideas which filled your soul to overflowing, such music as mortals seldom hear; but I have heard it, and to your genius, the genius of inspiration, I offer these words of gratitude: Trouvère de Bellevue, still continue to study nature in its most beautiful manifestations; let your soul feast on all that is noble, grand, and true, and your violin will never fail to translate its feelings! Walk in life with your eyes directed upward, in search of the beautiful and lofty, and the accents of your cherished violin will not cease to reverberate the splendid and perfect ideals which fill thy heart. Trouvère, the artist is in the soul, the musician in the instrument."

Applause followed this speech, to which all had listened with deep emotion.

Again were heard the taps of the drum, and the

master of ceremonies invited the guests to return to the music hall.

Trouvére offered his arm to the Countess, and leading the way, they seated themselves in front of the temporary stage.

A short time elapsed before the hum of conversation ceased. The master of ceremonies announced from the platform that one number of the musical programme remained yet to be performed, and that was a series of improvisations by Monsieur Trouvére de Bellevue.

The announcement startled the young artist. He had forgotten all about his own part in the performance, and looked imploringly at the Countess. With her most pleasant smile, she inquired :

“ Does my son find no subject for improvisation in the scenes that have just passed ? ”

At the words “ my son,” he was almost choked with tears, and mounted the platform trembling and excited. He looked at the Countess, and just behind her noticed the bewitching eyes of Olga, fully directed upon him. Several times his gaze was turned on them, while tuning his violin, and their tender smiles kindled his soul with thankfulness and encouragement. He commenced playing ; the tones were soft and slow ; the air, a simple prelude, almost a timid appeal for indulgence. By degrees, however, inspiration seemed to come. His eyes resting upon those of the Countess and often flashing on those of Olga, his instrument commenced to pour forth a hymn of love and thankfulness. So sweet were the tones that they seemed rather the expression of a soul than of mortal man. Exquisite melodies followed, as if portraying the tender feeling which a young and pure heart might whisper to another equally pure and innocent. It was a confession of love—of pure, exalted,

holy love ; a love so noble that it addressed itself to both the Countess and to Olga.

Soon the improvisation took a wider field. Casting his eyes upon the brilliant audience before him, and remembering the motive that brought them there, his soul seemed to bound to the very zenith in its musical flight. Never had such sounds been heard on the violin. Strains of exultation, bursts of joy, accents of determination followed each other, as if he longed to convince his listeners that the favor bestowed upon him was appreciated, its magnitude realized, and the responsibility understood and accepted.

The third series of improvisations was something never heard since Paganini's death. Trouvère seemed to cast a glance at the bright future before him. His eyes opened wide and shone like diamonds. His bow ran over the strings of the instrument, bringing forth strains of hope and of joy ; brilliant variations, requiring most rapid and dexterous manipulation. By degrees, the excitement of the performer grew still more intense. His bow crossed the chords, impelled by a more nervous force ; spasmodic strokes produced cries of joy ; his playing was something superb, indescribable ; all the feelings, passions, emotions that can bewilder a human soul were represented by the performer. Melodies that brought tears to the eye, wild outbursts of exultation and pæans of triumph were successively produced in most forcible, decided, and emphatic tones. The artist became so excited, his manner so agitated, his eyes so bewildered, his action so wild, that the audience, misunderstanding him, burst forth into a deafening peal of applause. All at once, under the strain of this nervous tension, Trouvère, producing a soul-stirring shriek on his violin, fell head-long on the stage, and in his fall

the violin was shattered into fragments. The shriek of the instrument was immediately answered by another in the audience, as Olga fell back senseless in her seat. For a moment disorder prevailed, and the crowd rushed toward the platform.

The Countess de Bellevue gave orders that the two young people should be removed to her own private room, where she would soon join them, and begged the company to withdraw to the supper-room, and refresh themselves, assuring them that Trouvère would soon be restored to consciousness, as excellent medical attendance was at hand.

At this juncture the aged director of the Conservatory was seen to mount the stage, and examine carefully the pieces of the broken instrument, everybody eagerly watching his movements. Sadly shaking his head he indicated that there was no hope for the restoration of the violin. But suddenly, his face brightened, and as he looked smilingly at the audience, a profound silence succeeded the buzz of excitement.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, with a kind, paternal smile, though tears trickled down his cheeks, "I have found the means of repairing the loss of our good friend, Trouvère. I have in my possession a real Stradivarius violin which I bought in Germany many years ago. I am very old, and can have but little further use for it. No better, nobler, or more worthy successor can I have than this peerless artist, Trouvère; therefore, now in the presence of you all, I donate to him, my precious instrument."

Saying this, the good director upheld to the view of the audience, his priceless violin. This kind and thoughtful act was greeted with applause, and many of the ladies provided with bouquets that were intended for

Trouvére, now threw them at the generous donor, carpeting the stage with floral tributes.

The aristocratic gathering, led by the master of ceremonies, then proceeded to the dining-room, where supper was served. The seat of the lady of the house, and one at its side remained empty. The festivities, however, had received but a momentary check.

In the chamber of Madame de Bellevue a scene of a different nature was being enacted. Trouvére lay stretched upon the Countess' bed, while Olga was resting on a sofa.

"This is a severe crisis," said one of the doctors, while holding the hand of Trouvére in his own. "The nervous organization of this young man is so sensitive, that the deep and varied emotions to which he has been to-day subjected, have brought about a sudden prostration."

"Is there any danger, Doctor?" inquired Madame de Bellevue, with anxious eyes.

"No, Countess; but great care must be taken for some days not to expose him to any further excitement. The potion I have sent for will restore him to a state of comparative calm. I should advise you, Countess, to rejoin your guests."

"I cannot leave Trouvére in this condition, Doctor."

"You must, indeed, Countess; if Monsieur Trouvére, on awakening to consciousness, finds you at his side, with tears flowing from your eyes, your presence will bring back to him all the excitement of the day, and he may have an immediate relapse. On the other hand, your guests, not seeing you return, will think that something serious is the matter with Trouvére, and a feeling of delicacy may prompt them to leave."

"Well, Doctor, be it as you say. I shall leave the

room, but as to returning to my guests, I cannot as long as my dear son is so ill. I shall remain in the cabinet adjoining," she said, pointing to a door leading into another room, "and as soon as Trouvère returns to consciousness, please, Doctor, let me know."

"Most assuredly, madame."

Olga, lying on the sofa supported by two attendants, was suffering from a violent fit of hysteria. While passing to the next room, the Countess, perceiving her sad condition, was about to approach her, when the doctor interfered, and opening the door insisted upon her leaving the chamber, assuring her at the same time that all would soon be well.

The valet who had been despatched to the druggist for medicines prescribed by the doctors, presently returned, and potions were administered to the patients.

Trouvère soon regained his consciousness. Opening his eyes and finding himself in a strange room, with a doctor at his side, he turned his looks around with an expression of inquiry. The doctor hastened to reassure him, saying that he had had a slight nervous attack, caused by too much excitement; that all he needed to insure a speedy recovery was rest and quiet.

Olga also became calmer, and was persuaded to remain motionless for a while.

The doctors again carefully examined their patients, and retiring to a corner of the room, held a short consultation. The result was, that they gave instructions to the attendants to administer doses of the medicine to the two invalids, every fifteen minutes, until they returned.

They then entered the room where the Countess had temporarily retired, and told her that the patients were progressing favorably; that there was no danger what-

ever ; and that the potions which were being administered would give them sleep.

At this point, a second messenger, sent by the guests, arrived, asking for information about the condition of the young people. The physicians at once decided to return to the hall, and urged, almost commanded, the Countess to accompany them. At last the doctors prevailed.

She was immediately surrounded by anxious inquirers, but referred them to the physicians at her side. These gentlemen allayed the anxiety of the visitors by informing them of the favorable condition of the young people, and the festivities were continued.

Meantime the two young people were rapidly returning to their normal condition, owing to the strong recuperative power of healthy youth.

From his bed, Trouvére could see Olga in the adjoining apartment. Only a short distance separated them. Moving his head toward her, he met her gaze, so full of deep feeling, and revealing such tender interest and affection, that he felt inclined to rise and take her by the hand. When he noticed, however, that she was stretched on a sofa, and was very pale, and that the attendant was administering medicine to her, he raised himself to a sitting posture, and was about to make inquiries in regard to her health, when one of the attendants addressing both of them, said :

“ Now, children, take one more dose, and then go to sleep. The doctors say that you need rest. You require no further attendance for a while. Try to sleep.”

Trouvére, having taken his medicine, turned his head toward the wall, closed his eyes, and gave every indication of composing himself for a long sleep. Olga did the same and the attendants left the room, giving a last

look at the two patients, whom they saw quietly resting with closed eyes and the calm expression of approaching sleep upon their faces. The last attendant, as he left the room, said softly :

“Sleep soundly, and you will be all right again when you awake ;” then closed the door carefully after him, which had the effect of opening at once the eyes of the two patients. Neither moved, but both, looking at the door, listened to the retreating steps of the attendants, as they descended the staircase. When the sounds were heard no longer, Trouvére and Olga rose, as if by previous agreement, to a sitting posture. Turning toward each other, their eyes met ; then gliding from his couch Trouvére hastened to Olga’s side and knelt beside the sofa, clasped her hands, and with eyes and face expressing the most affectionate anxiety, commenced his excited inquiries.

“Olga, my dear Olga,” said Trouvére in agony, “what is the matter with you ; are you ill ? For heaven’s sake, Olga, tell me what ails you ?”

Instead of answering, she anxiously inquired of him if he were better, and if he had hurt himself in falling.

Trouvére understood at last, that Olga, on seeing him faint and fall, had herself swooned.

Trouvére seated himself on the sofa beside Olga, still holding her hands. He looked into the very depths of her large sweet eyes.

“Olga, my dear Olga,” he said, his voice choking with emotion, “I cannot comprehend what I feel when in your presence, and holding your hands as I now do. A fire seems to warm my whole being. Since I held your hands in the Countess’ library on the evening when she fainted, after looking in that strange mirror, a sacred bond has linked me to you, ever bringing your image

present to my consciousness. If I go out into the woods for tranquility and peace, every shrub, every clinging vine recalls you to me. If I gaze at the sky, I see you in the stars; if I look at the flowers, in them I see you. If, to cool my feverish brain, I try to play some gay and joy-inspiring air, hardly have I played a few strains, when I discover my violin to be uttering tones of affection, pleadings of love, supplications, and it is to you that my violin is speaking; Olga, what is this that I feel for you? It must be that which the world calls love; yes dear," he said passionately, falling at her feet and pressing his lips to her hands: "I love you; my being, my soul longs for you; away from you I sigh for your presence; near you, holding your hands as I do now, resting my head upon your shoulder, pressing your hand upon my heart—ah! This is love, Olga; this is as I wish it to be forever! Absence from you Olga, is death; to be near you, my all, is heaven. Sweet Olga, is this wrong? Do I offend you? This is the truth that I tell you, dear one! That is what I feel. O pardon me, if I do wrong, Olga, for I am impelled to speak thus, though what I say, feebly expresses what I feel."

Olga, her beautiful, pure blue eyes, wide open, looked at Trouvére with all the innocence of an angel. What Trouvére had told her so glowingly, and with all the eloquence of a pure heart, seemed to her like a strain of celestial music. She listened to it with rapture; drank in with avidity all the feelings this music of words conveyed to her soul; her cheeks flushed with the delicate tint of the pale rose, and looking Trouvére honestly in the eyes, she replied:

"You tell the truth, Trouvére. I know that you tell the truth, for I experience in my soul the same feelings which you describe; I also know not if this be love; but what I do know, Trouvére, is that some sacred link

unites our souls—a link of which neither you nor I should be ashamed, for I can think of my sainted mother and of you at the same time, and both thoughts render me better. No later than last night, I saw in a dream, my beloved mother place a crown of flowers upon the head of both of us, for in that dream we were both together, and sitting as we now do.”

Footsteps were heard approaching; whereupon Trouvére hastily returned to his couch, and both assumed the appearance of being fast asleep, as the door opened, and one of the attendants entered.

After the dinner was over, the Countess, having opened the ball with the representative of the King as her partner, secretly retired, and directed her steps to the room of the invalids. She was delighted to find them chatting with the attendants, as if nothing had happened. They looked a little pale, perhaps, and felt somewhat weak in limb, but beyond that they appeared as usual.

The Countess was happy to see her children doing so well, and after consultation with them, told the attendant, first to conduct Trouvére to his room, and then to return and lead Olga to her apartment. Before retiring, Trouvére cast a longing look at the good Countess, saying :

“Am I not your son now?”

“Yes,” answered she with a smile, understanding his secret wish, and opening her arms.

When Trouvére had retired, she turned to Olga, and observing that the poor child cast upon her the same longing look, said :

“Of course, my dear sweet one,” and covered her face with kisses. “You are also my daughter, are you not?” affectionately inquired the Countess.

And Olga, with tears in her eyes, nodded assent, while following the attendant to her apartment.

CHAPTER XII.

FOUR months after their departure from California the Aztec queen and Mr. Livingston found themselves ensconced in one of those beautiful country homes on the shores of the river Meuse within the historic village of Choquier, and not far distant from the city of Liège, in Belgium. Livingston having seen the Queen and her maids comfortably installed, had but the one thought, to see his child. He took the train for Liège, and proceeded directly to Madame de Bellevue's seminary. She gave him a most hearty welcome, and sent for Olga at once. Livingston could not but admire his daughter, who had developed into a handsome young woman, distinguished in manners, graceful in bearing, and withal surrounded by a halo of childlike innocence, which appealed at once to his heart. Madame de Bellevue read his every emotion, and her eyes brilliant with satisfaction, seemed to flash forth to him this question :

“Behold your daughter, in all her grace, stateliness and innocence, and tell me if you do not believe my system of educating young ladies superior to the so-called practical method of the Americans?”

The Countess begged to be excused, wishing to leave father and daughter to converse together undisturbed. She did not retire, however, before having obtained from Livingston a promise to remain for dinner.

For nearly two hours Olga and her father were together. While strolling through the seminary park, the

child explained at length the nature of her studies and her proficiency in music, painting, artistic needlework, and fancy embroidery. Livingston was delighted and proud to find that his daughter excelled in such varied accomplishments. While thinking how deeply he was indebted to the Countess, a liveried servant admonished him that dinner was served.

A few invited guests were present, all parents or relatives of the seminary pupils, and among the company was Monsieur Trouvére. Livingston was invited to a seat immediately on Madame de Bellevue's right. When introduced to Trouvére, he was particularly attracted by his appearance, which he found so unlike that of the other Belgian gentlemen present. His piercing, though soft black eyes, his dark complexion, his hair of a peculiar shade of glossy black, and his strange, sweet, sad smile made him an intensely interesting person. He was strangely drawn toward him at first glance, and was sure he had seen him before, or at least some one who closely resembled him.

"You seem to be much interested in my son," said Madame de Bellevue, noticing how intently he gazed at Trouvére.

"Your son!" remarked Livingston, much astonished, "is that young gentleman your son?"

"Yes; he is an artist, a musician, and was the winner of the prize of honor at the grand concourse of the Conservatory of Brussels."

"He seems to be exceptionally intelligent. I like his appearance exceedingly. My reason for looking at him so closely was that I thought I had discovered in his features a resemblance which I cannot locate. Perhaps I am mistaken."

He added, however, to himself: "And still I am

sure that I know some one whose features are like those of Trouvére."

Before leaving the seminary, he obtained from his hostess a promise, that on the following Sunday she would dine with him at Choquier, accompanied by Olga. This he asked as a special favor, wishing to introduce her to some interesting personages who had accompanied him from America.

On the appointed day he met his daughter and the Countess at the station.

The introduction to the Queen was a little embarrassing, but Madame de Bellevue knew English indifferently, while the Queen still remembered some of her French, so that after a while conversation proceeded smoothly. Madame de Bellevue was greatly interested in the Queen, finding her no ordinary woman, although strange in manner and expression. Olga also took a fancy to her, especially after she had received from her many pretty Aztec trinkets, all of pure gold and silver.

When Livingston noticed that the Countess was thus favorably impressed, he asked Olga to look at the beautiful gardens surrounding the château, and to take a stroll through the conservatory. When the child was gone, he introduced at once the subject of the Queen's history, her relations with the King, her forced abduction to California, his own meeting with her there—and at last her determined resolution to find and recover her boy, no matter at what cost. The Countess remembered that at the time of Dolora's marriage many rumors were afloat about the strange demeanor of the sovereign toward some far distant princess; but these died away and were forgotten.

The Countess promised to do all in her power to help the Queen in her endeavor, though she had little

faith in the success of her undertaking, and was in doubt as to the manner in which she might render her assistance.

"We must do all we can to distract her mind," said the Countess, "lest she take her probable disappointment too much to heart. To-morrow night there is a little private soirée in my parlors, and you must bring the Queen. I will leave Olga with you until to-morrow afternoon, but then you must return with her to the seminary. You know, Mr. Livingston," she added with her pleasant smile, "that until you have formally withdrawn her from my institution, your daughter belongs to me—must obey me exclusively."

"It shall be as you command, Countess," he replied, bowing low.

At this moment Olga returned from the garden with two beautiful bouquets, one of which she gave to the Countess and the other to the Queen.

"And you, dear father, do not be jealous, for I have plucked this little rosebud for you," and while she spoke she pinned the bud to his coat.

After a *recherché* little dinner, for Livingston prided himself on the skill of his French cook, the Countess departed for Liège, much impressed by the Aztec queen and the importance of her errand.

Mr. Livingston, his daughter Olga, and the Queen took the train for Liège on the following day, and proceeded directly to the seminary.

Just before dinner was announced Trouvere entered the *salon*. As his eyes met those of the Aztec queen, he started, while the Queen quickly placed her hand upon her heart. Slowly, steadily, as though drawn by some unseen magnetism, they approached each other, not hearing the words of introduction which were being uttered. Their

hands met. An electric thrill seemed to pass from one to the other, and they stood silently gazing into each other's eyes, until, with a start, both seemed to realize that they were observed. Livingston looked several times alternately at the Queen and at Trouvére. "Now I have it," he exclaimed to himself; "I was satisfied that the son of Madame de Bellevue resembled some one I had met before, and I see that he bears a marked resemblance to the Queen; but he is the son of an aristocratic Countess. How strange that he should have the same cast of features as an Aztec queen! It is a mystery I shall not try to solve."

Often during dinner Trouvére's eyes met those of the Queen, and both did but scant justice to the well prepared *menu*. Trouvére almost neglected Olga, so much was he preoccupied.

As the hour for the evening's entertainment approached, the invited guests began to make their appearance, and were introduced to Livingston and the Queen. The last person announced was Monseigneur Clement de Silvereau, Archbishop of Simla. As the Queen beheld him a shudder ran through her. She knew that face. She had seen it before.

Madame de Bellevue introduced them, and as their eyes met, they exchanged looks of mutual recognition.

The entertainment commenced with recitations and piano solos by the most talented pupils of the seminary. During the intervals, the Archbishop had managed to obtain private discourse with the Countess, and had inquired particularly as to who the Queen was and whence she had come.

The Countess related to him the whole story of the Aztec queen, and the errand which had brought her to Belgium.

"The King, Dolora's husband, has wrought the ruin of that woman," said he aloud; "I remember her now. I must find out if the recovery of her lost son is the only motive that brings her to Europe again."

He recalled the dark image he had once seen heaping curses on Dolora.

"I do not understand your Grace," said the Countess.

"Pardon my untimely utterances," he replied very seriously; "later on I will explain some important matters to you."

Deep and indefinable emotions had taken possession of the Queen.

"Where have I seen that man?" she asked; "and why do I so shrink from him, although I know him to be worthy and superior? Why do I feel so irresistibly attracted toward Madame de Bellevue's son, and why does he himself seem to understand the feelings that fill my own heart, as his gaze ever fixed on me would seem to indicate?"

The eyes of the Archbishop were also fixed on the Queen, but with the glassy, vacant expression which impressed one as looking inwardly instead of outwardly. Soon he was perfectly satisfied as to when and where he had seen her before. The entire change in her attire had at first deceived him. A feeling of pity filled his bosom, as he mentally reviewed the events of her career, as related by the Countess. Her countenance also seemed so sad, so dejected amid the diversions of the hour.

It was now Trouvere's place on the programme of the entertainment. He slowly mounted the platform, and while tuning his instrument fixed his eyes on the Queen, whose presence threw around him a magic charm. The pianist who accompanied him was a thorough musician,

and could follow him even in his most extravagant improvisations. Trouvère started slowly one of his weird melodies, still looking at the Queen. Hardly had he commenced when she bent forward with rapt attention, steadily increasing in intensity as the violinist proceeded. Trouvère, as if under the spell of a new inspiration, threw his whole soul into the performance, playing at times so sweetly, so pleadingly as to bring tears to the eyes; and anon the staccato notes, as his bow shot violently across the strings, threatened to dash the instrument to pieces. The violin alternately seemed to pray, scream, plead, or curse. When at the height of one of these wild improvisations, it seemed as though endowed with life, echoing every wild cry that a human soul could utter. All at once a scream startled the audience, and with hands outstretched toward Trouvère, the Queen exclaimed, "No! no!" and the same instant fell unconscious to the floor. In a moment Trouvère was at her side, but Olga had anticipated him, and was already doing what she could to restore her to her senses. Madame de Bellevue, herself greatly agitated, gave orders to have the lady removed to her own room. The entertainment then broke up, the guests departed, and the Archbishop repaired with anxious mind to his palace.

The Queen had sufficiently recovered to return to Choquier by the night train. Before leaving she requested that Madame de Bellevue, her son Trouvère, and Olga would spend with her the afternoon of the following day.

The Countess passed a sleepless night; strange misgivings crossed her brain, and a vague feeling of apprehension saddened her heart.

"What does all this mean?" she asked anxiously of herself; "the interest in Trouvère first manifested by

Livingston; then the strange and constant glances of the Queen toward my son during dinner; the unaccountable behavior of the Queen, during Trouvére's wild improvisations; her fainting, and the eagerness with which he ran to her aid."

All these incidents filled her with disquietude. Suddenly she uttered a cry, and clasping her hands to her head, cried aloud, "Could it be! could it be possible! O Lord of Heaven! do not let me lose my son, my dear Trouvére, upon whom all the hopes and loves of my life have been centered!"

Then slowly calming herself, "No, no," she said in a low voice; "those things happen only in romance, and never take place in actual life."

The next day Madame de Bellevue took the train for Choquier in a very sad frame of mind, accompanied by Olga and her adopted son. Thoroughly occupied with the vague intimations of her heart, she did not notice the state of abstraction which had also overtaken her companions. Trouvére was singularly changed since the previous night. His meeting with the strange lady, whom Olga's father had called a queen and treated with much respect, had wrought the transformation. From the very instant when he beheld her, and especially from the moment he had touched her hand, he had felt a subtle influence creep over him which acted as a link, as a secret tie between her and himself. To define the cause or import of this bond was not possible; in fact it was a mere sentiment or emotion, he did not know which, but nevertheless the attraction existed and made itself strongly felt. He knew also intuitively that the weird variations he had played, variations which had occurred to him at the moment, and as a decided inspiration, were understood and interpreted. Who could she be?

Where had he known her? for surely she did not appear to him a stranger.

These reflections were interrupted by a question from Olga, who asked what he thought of her papa's queen. He opened his eyes wide, as if disturbed from deep meditations, and gazed vaguely at the questioner, but gave no answer.

"I, for one," continued Olga, "like her very much. There seems to be such a cloud of sadness hanging over her, that she fills my heart with pity. Then she looks so much like a queen, that she not only commands my deepest sympathy but my respect. How do you like her, Monsieur Trouvére?"

He smiled sweetly, and as the train had come to a stop at Choquier, replied: "Some other time I will open my heart to you."

The Queen received Madame de Bellevue with a warm welcome; but both women wore a sad smile. Olga kissed the former, who after clasping her in a fond embrace, gave her hand to Trouvére.

"Welcome, Monsieur Trouvére," she said, "always welcome."

Dinner was soon announced, but the guests partook scantily of the bounteous repast, for each soul was filled with varied emotions and apprehensions. When it was nearly ended, the Queen begged to be excused for a few moments and left the dining-room. Suddenly the guests were aroused by strains of music proceeding from an interior apartment. Trouvére listened attentively at first, and soon became extremely nervous. The music was the same to which he had listened so many times in his dreams, and which had been so often the subject of his most successful inspirations. He heard the same weird, wild intonations, followed by soft, pleading notes, as of

one who entreated and implored. The sensitive nature of the young artist was aroused almost beyond endurance. At this juncture a servant entered and whispered a few words to Mr. Livingston. Immediately the latter took Trouvére by the hand, led him outside the dining hall in the direction of the music, inviting the Countess and Olga to follow. At the conservatory, the guests beheld a strange sight. Tropical plants and the scent of tropical flowers were the first things which claimed their attention. In the center of the apartment, a strange altar was erected, and upon it a fire was burning. Around this altar walked two dark complexioned maidens, in strange attire, chanting weird songs, and at intervals casting pieces of odorous wood into the flames. The Queen, seated at its foot, was playing upon the marimba, the strange airs which had aroused her guests. She was attired in the gorgeous, gold-covered vestments of the Aztec queen and priestess; and beside her was her staff, leaning against the altar. Trouvére was paralyzed. There, before his eyes, was the scene which he had beheld in his visions; the same altar with its burning fire, fed with sweet-scented woods; and the Queen, the mysterious Queen, in her bodily presence, in strange and rich attire, drawing from that little instrument those indefinable tones which from childhood had stirred his soul to its inmost depths. What did it all mean?

He felt an impulse to seize his violin and play the same airs the Queen was playing, for he understood them all, and could have anticipated each strain, for they all belonged to him; were part of him. Now that he actually beheld the mystic scene so often present in his dreams, those melodies, with their strange and weird accentuations, surged to his brain, and he realized that

they were understood only by himself and by the mysterious being now present before him.

The Queen was much agitated, and with the same feelings which so deeply moved Trouvère. She felt that by right he belonged to her.

His features, his moods and affinities, all marked him as a gifted and worthy son of the Aztec nation. She arose, and looked at the young artist with eyes kindled with affection and excitement. Extending her arms toward him, she cried, "Come to me, son of Montezuma." Moved by an irresistible impulse he obeyed, and long they remained clasped in each other's arms. Then the Queen began to weep bitterly.

"Pardon me, Madame de Bellevue. Forgive my strange conduct," she said. "You cannot imagine how much I suffer and have suffered. You know the story of my life. For one brief instant the thought of having recovered my beloved son caused me to lose all self-control. I see now it is all illusion, for he is your son and not mine. Again pardon me, for I think I am becoming insane."

The kind-hearted Countess de Bellevue was entirely unstrung; tears sprang to her eyes. Every pang torturing that mother's heart was deeply echoed in her own. Half bewildered, she said:

"God grant that you may recover your son. What are your plans for the future, may I ask, dear Queen, when your son will be with you? Will you take him to America?"

"That my son will have to decide," the Queen answered. "If I find him, I shall live for him, and for those who may have been instrumental in restoring him to me. To be with him constantly; to bestow upon him that love which has been consuming my heart for many

years, is the sole aim of my life. Be it here, in Liège, in California, or in Yucatan, where the remnants of the Aztec nation live to-day ; all that is immaterial to me."

The guests departed for Liège that evening in a much disturbed condition of mind. Before taking the train, Trouvére had found an opportunity for a short conversation with Livingston, during which he learned the story of the Queen's life, and her errand to the European continent.

Few of Livingston's guests slept the following night. To say that Monsieur Trouvére was very nervous and much disturbed, but feebly expresses the condition of his mind. Was this Aztec queen his mother? Was he the son of a degraded monarch? Then the remembrance of his many visions, wherein the Queen always played the principal rôle, passed before his memory; at last, wearied with his own thoughts, he fell asleep.

The Countess de Bellevue was no less disturbed. She also asked the question: "Is this Aztec queen the mother of Trouvére?"

Being very conscientious, her aim in life being to adhere rigidly to that which she considered right, she decided at once that she would act promptly and vigorously in this important and perhaps personal matter. She determined to see Archbishop de Silvereau the next morning and ask his advice. "In any case," she said to herself, "Trouvére would not be lost to me, as the Queen will be contented to live where he chooses to live, and assuredly he will never consent to abandon me in my old age."

The next morning the Countess drove to the palace, and was immediately received by his Grace. Having stated her errand she asked his advice as to her duty in the matter.

"Very simple it seems to me," announced the Prelate. "Confide to Mr. Livingston the story of Trouvére; put him on the track of the woman who gave Trouvére to you when a child, and I am sure that he will do the rest."

The Countess followed this advice. She confessed to the Queen's protector that Trouvére was not her real but her adopted son; that he was a foundling, whom she had taken care of and educated since he was twelve years old.

"Then he is surely the son of our Queen. We have found him at last, found him, found him!" he continued to exclaim. Madame de Bellevue calmed him by saying that so far all was mere hypothesis; that before the Queen should be made aware of Trouvére's real origin he should try to obtain proofs of the boy's career before he was adopted.

"How can I?" exclaimed the American.

"Listen," she continued; "I received Trouvére when a mere child, from one whom we thought to be his mother. She acknowledged afterwards, however, having taken him from another woman then living in Brussels. Here is the address of the former; go and see her."

"This shows that the woman who gave you the child still lives in Brussels."

"Yes, we pay her a stated sum yearly. In order to avoid certain meetings between her and Trouvére; meetings that might have proved embarrassing, we prevailed upon her to remove to that city."

"Very well," said Livingston. "I will start for Brussels to-morrow morning."

"Be careful not to let the Queen suspect the motive of your trip to the capital. Here is a letter of introduc-

tion to the woman, and the amount due for a year's stipend. This will induce her to talk more freely."

On reaching Brussels, Livingston proceeded at once to the woman's house, and found her engaged in sewing. He handed her Madame de Bellevue's letter containing her yearly stipend.

"And now, madame," said the American; "I will offer you an opportunity to make a large sum of money. If you can discover the real parents of the boy you gave to Madame de Bellevue, I will give you ten thousand francs."

"But I do not know them myself," she exclaimed in the greatest astonishment.

"How did the boy come into your possession?" asked Livingston.

The woman hesitated; she had her yearly pension in view, and did not know what might be the result of this investigation.

Livingston seemed to read her thoughts, and gave her full assurance that she had everything to gain by imparting truthfully the information required. He promised that her yearly allowance would be continued, and that in addition he would pay the handsome sum which he had stated if she would tell all she knew and if it should result in their finding the boy's parents.

"I was living in Liège," the woman said, answering Livingston's question, "when coming to the city of Brussels on some business, I met one of my oldest friends. She told me that she had a baby boy left on her hands, and did not know what to do with him. As she saw that I was astonished, she added that the child was not her own, but had been abandoned by its mother, who had disappeared, no one knew where, while she was engaged as its nurse. 'One afternoon,' she said,

‘while returning from the park with the child, I found the house closed. A rough man, who looked like an officer, told me to be gone with the baby, and never to show my face again. He, however, gave me five hundred francs, with the advice to keep my lips closed. I have kept the child in my room until the present time. The five hundred francs are spent, and as I want to get married, I do not wish to be embarrassed with this child any longer; the more so that my intended husband entertains a suspicion that it may be my own; so, if you will take the child, here it is.’

“My friend told me this,” continued the woman, “and as I had no children and felt extremely lonesome, I wrote to my husband, and he advised me to take the boy home. We were very happy for a few years. Then my poor man died from over work, and I was left a widow with my boy. I earned my living by day work until my health gave way and I became a pauper. It was then that the good mistress of the seminary took my boy and gave me a yearly sum, which she has allowed me ever since. So you see, dear sir,” concluded the woman with anxious looks, “that if I were to lose my yearly pension, nothing would be left for me but to go into the public streets and starve.”

Livingston renewed again the assurance of his intention to provide for her and she grew more communicative.

“Where is this woman at present? Give me her address,” said Livingston.

“She is no longer in this city.”

“Where is she?”

“She married and removed with her husband to her home in Amsterdam.”

“And is there now?”

"I suppose she is; but I have lost all trace of her since she moved."

"What is her name?"

"Julia."

"Be prepared to start for Amsterdam with me to-morrow morning," said Livingston. "We must find that woman. Here are one hundred francs with which to buy clothes. I will call for you; be sure you are ready."

The other regarded him with mute astonishment, but offered no objection.

"Don't lose time," said Livingston on taking leave; "go right out, buy clothing and attire yourself neatly; money will not be wanting."

He then wrote to the Countess that she should learn from the Queen immediately the name of the child's nurse at the time she was kidnapped and put on board the vessel, the answer to be directed to the Hotel Royal, Amsterdam, where two days later he arrived, accompanied by the woman, Mary.

While awaiting Madame de Bellevue's answer, he passed a few hours every day strolling with his companion through the business streets and markets of the workman's quarters, where perchance they might encounter the nurse.

They searched hopelessly amid the crowded markets, every house-wife who frequented them, every woman about the age of Julia being questioned or visited in vain. At length, in sore discouragement, they were about to give up their task when, as Livingston was entering his carriage, one day, to be driven home, the woman clutched nervously at his arm and whispered in his ear:

"There she is! That is she, I am almost sure!"

"See whether you can recognize her and learn her address; nothing more as yet; then promise to go and see her, if it is really Julia."

The woman approached unperceived the person she had pointed out to Livingston, and when in front of her, stretched out her hand, and said in a decided tone:

"*Bonjour, Julia; comment vous portez-vous?*"

The other looked her full in the face but showed no sign of recognition.

"Don't you know your old friend Mary of Liège, to whom you gave your dear little boy? My clothes are a little better than usual perhaps, and that may be the reason you do not remember me."

"Is it really you, Mary?" said Julia, her reserve melting. "I am delighted to meet you, and to see you well-to-do. How is the dear boy getting on?"

"We must have a long talk together, Julia, for I have many good things to tell you. Please give me your address, and I will call on you and bring something good for dinner. But how are you faring yourself?"

"None too well; my husband, who is a carpenter, has had much sickness. This is where I live," pointing to a house near at hand.

"I will come and see you very soon, and may be able to do something for you in return for the favor you have done me in intrusting me with your boy. *Au revoir.*"

"Come soon," she answered, warmly, shaking Mary's hand.

Livingston with his companion then entered the carriage and were driven to the hotel. The clerk handed him a letter containing the single word "Julia."

He now wrote to the Countess to come immediately to Amsterdam, accompanied by the Queen and Trouvére; that he was extremely sorry to give her all this trouble,

but it was absolutely necessary that they should start at once.

He then made the following calculations : If Madame de Bellevue should see the Queen at once, which she will surely do, how much time would it take the ladies with Trouvère for escort, to arrive at Amsterdam ? One day from Liège to Antwerp, with the necessary rest, and one day from Antwerp to Amsterdam. He determined that Mary's visit to Julia should take place on the third day after he had written to Liège.

The next day being Thursday, Mary was instructed to write a note to Julia, stating that on the following Monday she would take dinner with her, and on the Friday would send the necessary provisions and funds to prepare for an enjoyable time. Sunday evening brought to the hotel the Countess de Bellevue, the Queen and Trouvère. To all their manifold questions, Livingston simply answered that they needed rest, for the next day would probably be an eventful one for all.

Toward noon of the following day, they repaired to Julia's modest home. Mary entered first, and was warmly received by her old friend, in a scantily furnished, but clean and tidy room.

"The friends to whom I owe all my comforts are waiting below," said Mary ; "they wish to see you, and knowing that they are willing to do as much for you, also, I brought them here. Oblige them in any way you can ; they will surely repay you."

Julia waited anxiously, while her visitors were slowly ascending the creaking staircase. She received them with low salutations, not a little surprised that Mary should have such distinguished looking acquaintances. When all were seated, the Queen slowly removed her cloak, and displayed the same dress that she wore on

the day when she had been abducted by the King's order. Her eyes never left Julia, and at length, though much changed by age and misfortune, she seemed to recognize her. Now fully convinced that the woman before her was indeed the former nurse of her child, she arose, and, extending her hand and smiling sweetly, though with sinking heart, said in broken French: "*Bonjour, Julia, ne me reconnaissez-vous pas ?*"

Julia opened wide her eyes, looked intently for a moment at her visitor, and then exclaimed in great excitement :

"Madame la Duchesse d'Aztec !"

Seeing the violence of Julia's emotion, and her pallor-stricken features, the Queen and Madame de Bellevue assured her that all were friends, and that she would be comfortably provided for as Mary had been if she would impart to them truthfully the information they desired.

"Yes," said Mary, "tell them the real truth, and they will do as they have said."

"To commence with," said Livingston, "here is a proof of our feelings toward you," and he emptied a bag of gold on the table.

Julia clasped her hands in astonishment, and looked at the gold with wild excitement.

"What do you want me to do?" she said.

"Do all in your power to help this unfortunate mother to find her child. Perhaps you do not know that the sudden abandonment of her child was not voluntary on her part; she was seized by highwaymen, put on board a vessel, and shipped on the high seas. Do you remember any of the features of the child she left with you?"

"Yes. He had striking black eyes, intensely black hair, and the complexion of his mother; a little lighter perhaps."

"What did you do with him?"

At this question Julia commenced crying.

"It was not my fault, sir," she said; "the child was left with me and I kept it until the five hundred francs given to me by the officer who chased me from the door of Madame's residence, were expended. He warned me besides never to let my face be seen in the neighborhood again. And, moreover, I was about to be married, and my future husband, seeing how much I loved the child, began to think that I was its mother, and was growing cold toward me. Then I met Mary, and as I knew her to be a very kind-hearted woman and without children, I offered her the child. She accepted it, and I know, sir, that she took good care of it," she added with emphasis.

"Duchess d'Aztec, do you recognize this woman as being the nurse of your child at the time the abduction took place?"

"I do."

"You Julia, do you positively recognize this lady as being the Duchess d'Aztec, the mother of the child you gave to Mary?"

"I do, sir."

"Is this woman here present, the same person, Mary, to whom you gave the child?"

"She is, sir."

"Mary, is this woman here present, whom you call Julia, the same woman who gave to you the child in question?"

"I surely recognize her as the same woman who gave me the child."

"You, Mary, what did you do with the child given to you by Julia here present?"

"Ask the Countess de Bellevue; she will tell you."

"I wish you, Mary, to tell me yourself what you did with the child."

"I gave it to the Countess de Bellevue, who said she intended to bring up the boy in a seminary, and give him a thorough education, especially in music, for which he seemed to show great talent. He was playing upon his harmonica all the time when he was not dreaming, for he was a great dreamer."

"How old was the boy when you gave him to the Countess?"

"About twelve years, I should judge."

"Countess de Bellevue, do you recognize the person here present, called Mary, as ever having given to you a boy about twelve years old?"

"I do," said the Countess, half choking.

"Countess de Bellevue," asked Livingston, "can you tell us where the boy is, who was given to you by this woman, Mary?"

"I can," answered the Countess, stifling her emotion. "He is here; he is my adopted son, Trouvère de Bellevue."

The Queen uttered a cry and fell back fainting; the Countess wept bitterly, and Trouvère, with tears streaming down his cheeks, ran to his mother, now for the first time made known to him.

The Queen remained unconscious for a long time, and when she at length revived, all departed for the hotel, except Mary, who remained with Julia. On stepping into the carriage Livingston said to her, "I will come again and fulfill my promises."

The Queen could not speak or even think, so profoundly was she agitated. The Countess' feelings were of a dual nature. In the secret recesses of her lofty soul, she felt a glowing happiness at the thought of hav-

ing been instrumental in restoring a long lost child to a despairing mother. On the other hand she had loved Trouvére as her own child, had formally recognized and adopted him, never thinking for a moment of the possibility of losing him ; and now this strange and sudden disclosure gave to another woman an absolute right over the boy, the right even to bear him away to distant and foreign lands. But with the conviction that Trouvére would not consent to leave her forever, she put away the thought which nevertheless filled her soul with sadness.

Trouvére's brain was in a fever. The momentous events which had succeeded each other so rapidly, had bewildered him ; his soul was a whirlpool of contending emotions. While in the carriage on his way to the hotel, he kept a firm hold on the Countess' hand, realizing that the love he felt for her would never lessen, however destiny might shape his future life.

The love for his mother, his real mother, was to him a new creation ; the evolution of a love springing from the tie of blood, which he had never before experienced. He was proud to feel that he could give to his own mother all the filial affection for which her long bereaved heart so keenly hungered, without detracting in the least from the profound and holy affection which filled his soul for the noble being who had so tenderly cared for him and to whom he owed all that he was and would be.

On reaching the hotel, Madame de Bellevue, being perfectly acquainted with the workings of the human heart, turned to the Queen with a sad but tender smile, and gently intimated that she wished to be alone with Mr. Livingston for awhile, thus allowing her to retire with Trouvére. The queen understood her and replied

merely by a look, expressing the deepest affection. Then taking Trouvére by the hand she entered her own apartments.

"Oh! my son," she exclaimed, "I have suffered so much—so much! But at last I have found you, never to lose you again," looking anxiously in Trouvére's eyes.

"Never, mother," he answered in a decided tone.

A feeling of intense happiness brightened the Queen's face; the cloud that had hung over her heart since she had found her son disappeared at once before the sunshine of his smile and his hearty assurance.

"Now tell me of your life," she said, seating herself beside him, and looking at him tenderly.

Trouvére related to his mother at length, all his experiences in life; the tender and affectionate care of Madame de Bellevue; his musical education; his success at the Conservatory; the steady encouragement he had received from the Queen Dolora, before whom he had several times been invited to appear. Here his mother uttered a violent sob, but not suspecting its real cause, he continued to describe the scene at the grand *salons* of Madame de Bellevue, when she had formally adopted him as her son, and bestowed upon him, by special mandate of the Belgian monarch, the title of Count de Bellevue, and which had been borne by the most honorable and eminent men of her aristocratic family.

"Oh! the noble lady, the grand soul! I divine the Duchess' feelings. Let us go to her at once. Let us tell her that you will live with her always, so that she may continually behold in you the object of her disinterested love and munificent kindness of heart."

The Queen, followed by her son, re-entered Madame de Bellevue's room.

"Countess," she said, "Trouvére has told me all you have done for him. I now fully realize that he belongs to you, more even than to me, for I have been prevented by unfortunate circumstances from giving him the loving, tender care and the education which I could have done, had I been enabled to keep him near me. You have done more and better for him than I could have done myself. Hence Trouvére belonging to both of us, must stay with both. I will continue to reside at Choquier, which is only a short distance from Liège, so that you may have Trouvére near you at all times."

"The mother of Trouvére," answered the Countess, taking the Queen's hand, "could not be other than a noble and kind-hearted woman. A thousand thanks to you, Queen, for leaving me this great consolation of my later years."

Trouvére took both the Countess and his mother by the hand, and at that moment the three realized that they were bound by ties of affection which would never be broken except by death.

Two days later our friends were again in their respective homes at Choquier and Liège. Trouvére, of course, was at the little château, by order of the Countess, who interpreted the unexpressed yearnings of his mother's heart.

CHAPTER XIII.

ABOUT a week afterward a carriage stopped at the château, from which an elegantly dressed gentleman alighted and asked for Monsieur Trouvère de Bellevue. He introduced himself by handing his card, on which was the name of the most celebrated musical manager of the day.

"I come to see you," he said, introducing the subject of his visit at once, "to offer you an engagement for an artistic tour through North and Central America. I am forming a concert company, composed of the very best artists Europe can furnish. Considering you, Monsieur de Bellevue, one of the leading violinists of the day, I will pay you one thousand francs for every night you perform, and all your traveling expenses. I wish to start within a month. Consider my offer, the enthusiastic 'bravos' that are awaiting you over the waters, and send me your answer within a week, at the address written on this card."

"You will stay to dinner, sir; I wish to make you acquainted with my mother, whom I must consult in the matter."

The impressario consented. He discussed fully the project of the American tour, spoke in such glowing terms of the triumphs awaiting Belgium's most celebrated violinist, that he made the Queen's heart fairly bound with pride. She listened most graciously to the manager's proposition, not for the money consideration, but for the triumphs it would bring to her son; triumphs

which she would surely enjoy as much as himself. The impresario was assured that within a week he would receive a definite answer.

No sooner had he departed than Livingston, returning from a trip to Liège, made his appearance. On being informed of the visit and its purpose, he broke forth into a fit of enthusiasm: "A tour through America!" said he, "certainly he must go; we will all go with him. An American trip is the crowning glory of a true artist's career. To-morrow we will go and see the Countess about it."

On reflection, however, Livingston realized that it would require some diplomacy to broach the subject to Madame de Bellevue. For the Queen to take her son to America, almost immediately after having recovered him, would look very much like a well-studied scheme to have him all to herself.

"But no, that surely cannot be," said this shrewd observer to himself. He then telegraphed to the musical manager that he would call on him on Monsieur Trouvère's behalf, at ten o'clock the next morning at his hotel in Liège.

Livingston was at the hotel at the appointed time. Entering at once on the subject that brought him there, he explained that it would be impossible for the young artist to go to America, although he and his mother made no objection, unless he could first obtain the consent of the Countess de Bellevue. He proceeded at length to explain the relations existing between Trouvère, his real mother, and his mother by adoption.

"I understand the situation well," said the manager, "and it will be an easy task to arrange that matter to the satisfaction of all parties; I will call on the Countess de Bellevue immediately."

Upon being ushered into the lady's presence, he explained his errand. "The world-wide reputation of Monsieur Trouvère de Bellevue as an artist and violinist," he said, "has induced me to come to Liège and offer to the young gentleman the best terms at my disposal. I propose to secure for him a series of triumphs unparalleled in the musical world, triumphs which would place him forever among the great masters of the nineteenth century. I am sure," he continued, "that Monsieur Trouvère de Bellevue would never receive from any one a more advantageous offer than my own, for instance, Countess, if you should desire you can visit America. A trip that would last six months and no longer, for at that time Monsieur Trouvère will be commanded to play before the Court during the visit of the Czarowitch of Russia, who will then be the guest of our King. But on making to Monsieur Trouvère, a proposition which I was sure he would gladly accept, I was astonished to hear him decline it at once, although he confessed to me that an American tour, like the one proposed, had been for years the secret dream of his life. Upon demanding his motive, he said that he was sure that you would never allow him to go so far away. Of course, I do not know his reasons for supposing that you would stand between him and his musical triumphs. Moreover, I do not think that there are reasons powerful enough to prevent an eminent artist like Trouvère de Bellevue, from receiving the confirmation due to his talents in the New World. He has no right to hide his genius in a small city or even in a kingdom; his gifts belong to the world at large, which gave it to him. In six months we shall be back. Meanwhile, the newspapers of the whole world will be ringing with descriptions of his unparalleled success; young violinists will

feel encouraged in their careers, and music and art will receive a great impulse in America. Trouvère will return loaded with presents and laurels, and you Madame de Bellevue, will feel prouder and happier than you ever felt in your life. Now, madame, will you give your consent?"

"I cannot prevent his going to America, sir."

"That is not it, madame. Monsieur Trouvère will not sign an agreement with me, not only if you do not readily consent to it, but if you do not urge him to take the trip; and still, as he confessed to me, his eyes sparkling with vivid anticipation, the secret dream of his life was the realization of an artistic tour like the one I propose."

"You say you intend to return within six months?"

"In six months he must be here to play before the Court, as will be commanded by the King."

"Well, please call again to-morrow, and I may have something to say about the matter."

Hardly had the impressario left the room than the attendant told her that Mr. Livingston had called upon his daughter, and was in the reception-room below. The Countess sent word to him not to leave the seminary without seeing her, for she wished to speak to him. After shaking hands cordially, and relating the visit of the musical manager, and the conversation that followed, she asked him what he thought of the whole matter. Without the least hesitation he advised that the young artist should by all means make the American tour. He knew the Americans' enthusiasm for true talent, and was convinced that Trouvère would return a greater musical genius than ever, as the many strange and wonderful aspects of the New World could not fail to create inspirations that would influence him through life.

"But what does his mother say about the trip? She must be particularly anxious to visit her country with her newly found son?" inquired the Countess, anxiously.

"Not at all. When Trouvére, speaking to her about the offer of the impressario, asked for her opinion, she simply advised him to talk the matter over with you, as surely your tender and unfailing solicitude during the long years of his education was sufficient assurance that you would give him the wisest counsel."

The Countess' features brightened, and a sigh of satisfaction rose to her lips.

"The Queen," continued Livingston, "said to her son, however, that she had fully decided to remain for the rest of her life in this country; but that she must, some time, make one more trip to America."

"Yes," said the Countess, as if speaking to herself, "the Queen might go with him, make a final settlement of all her affairs and return with Trouvére at the end of six months."

"I think myself that this would be the proper way, for I know, having personally observed the Queen among her own tribe, that she possesses a vast amount of wealth, which one day she would wish to bequeath to Trouvére. Six months will soon pass."

"I like this idea. Please tell Trouvére and the Queen to come and see me to-morrow morning if possible. The impressario will be here in the afternoon, and I wish to inform him of our decision."

Happy at the success of his innocent stratagem, Livingston hastened to Choquier.

The next morning, Trouvére and his mother hastened to the seminary where their interview was most satisfactory. The Countess insisted that he should accept the offer and take the trip to America, but that he must re-

turn as soon as possible. Trouvére kissed her affectionately, and it was decided to accept the proposition of the musical manager.

"I will write to you every day," said Trouvére. "If any applause should greet me, I will immediately remember that I owe it to you and send you your share in my letter; but you must promise in return to write as often as your heart will dictate and strength permit."

It was agreed that the Countess should spend as many days at Choquier as possible before the Queen and Trouvére departed for America. The Queen asked permission to take Olga with her for a few days, until Madame de Bellevue should come to Choquier, and the request was granted.

The morning following her arrival was a beautiful one; the sun cast his golden light on the little château and the river Meuse whose waters flowed placidly in front. The meadows, blossoming with many colored jewels, peeping through the dark green carpeting below, were delightful to behold. Butterflies innumerable were coquetting with the flowers, those sweet smiles of mother nature, and the birds, happy in their flight, were chirping and singing, as if to thank the Creator in their own way, for the glorious day he had bestowed upon them.

Olga, enticed by the beautiful landscape, had rambled along the shores of the Meuse, picking a flower here and there, while inhaling the pure, sweet air of the valley. Trouvére, perceiving her from the window of his room, came out and joined her.

"My dear Olga," he said, "I must have a long talk with you. So many things have recently happened, which have a very important bearing upon the destinies of my life. Let us walk to the small boat over there. We will row across the river, and take a stroll on the

other side; there we will not be interrupted. Your father is very busy talking to my mother, about our future American tour, so they will not call us for a while."

"Your mother! our future American tour! I do not understand."

"About all these things I wish to speak to you." -

The boat was found, and the river crossed. The young couple seated themselves upon the soft grass in the shade of a clump of blossoming willows.

Trouvére enumerated, in detail, the circumstances which had led to the finding of his real mother, the Queen. He told her also who was his father, and how much her own father had been instrumental in bringing about the happy result related, and with what devotion and sacrifice of self-comfort he had constantly acted.

At the recital of all these unexpected events, Olga felt as if in a dream.

"And now, my dear Olga," he said, taking her by the hand, "I have received a magnificent offer to make a professional trip through America. My mother will accompany me. Your father has not yet signified his intention as to what he will do. He may decide to accompany us, and leave you at the seminary, or he may stay and remain near you. Very likely he is at this moment talking the matter over with my mother. As for myself, Olga, I have fully determined not to go to America unless you go with me. It would be impossible for me to remain so long and so far away from you. Without your presence I should have no inspiration, and my violin would only echo the sad feeling of my desolate heart. Now, my beloved one," said he enthusiastically, as he clasped her hand more tenderly in his own, and looked deeply into her eyes, "you must come with

me, and to come with me you must be my wife. Do you love me enough to take me for your husband, for better or for worse, through life and until death shall part us ? ”

Olga's head drooped upon his shoulder as she looked up into his face and said “ yes ” in so sweet a tone that Trouvére gently kissed away the tears which now glistened like diamonds upon her drooping eye-lashes.

“ Let us go home,” said he exultingly. “ Let us go at once. Our decision may change many plans.”

The river was re-crossed and the château reached. Both with hands still clasped, directed their steps to the reception-room, where Livingston and the Queen were yet in earnest conversation.

As Trouvére and Olga entered the room, their fond hand-clasp and the expression of joy upon their faces told in language plainer than words the emotions of their hearts.

For an instant the Queen and Livingston exchanged looks of mutual amazement. Then realizing the wisdom of the union they also clasped hands while happy smiles upon their faces reflected those of the young lovers. This union would cement more closely the friendship between the Queen and Livingston, and gladly would she give her son to the daughter of him to whom she was indebted for her happiness, and for whom she felt unbounded gratitude.

When Livingston asked his child whether she loved Trouvére, she flew into her father's arms, leaned her head upon his shoulder, and burst into tears.

“ Now come to me, my daughter,” said the Queen, and she clasped Olga affectionately upon her bosom. “ My son could have no sweeter wife than you, the daughter of one to whom I owe everything that is dear in life,” extending her hand to Livingston.

"To-morrow," said Trouvére, "Olga and I will see the Countess and ask her consent to our marriage."

"We will accompany you," said the Queen and Livingston at the same time; then the latter added:

"We have some business to transact before we can go to the seminary, so your mother and I will take an early train and await you at noon, when we will all go together to see the Countess."

On the following day they proceeded to Liège, and went directly to the study of M. Servais, a notary public. At noon, they were joined by Trouvére and Olga, and all four drove to the seminary. The Countess received her visitors as always, with her sweetest welcome. When they were seated, Trouvére took Olga by the hand, conducted her to the Countess, and in a most respectful tone asked her to consent to their marriage.

"What do you ask of me, Trouvére?" she inquired, as if not sure of having understood him aright.

"To be kind enough to give your consent to our marriage. She has promised to accept me as her husband if you give your assent."

"And you, have you nothing to say?" inquired the Countess of the Queen and the American, while tears of joy fell from her eyes.

"We shall be happy to give our consent also," they both responded.

"This is a world of wonders. I hardly know where I am. And when you make Olga your wife, you will take her to America with you I suppose, and then Mr. Livingston will leave this country also." And the Countess sighed.

The Queen stepped forward, and handing a package of papers to the Countess, said:

"I have this morning bought for Trouvére and Olga

the mansion adjoining this seminary. Within six months, we shall all have returned, and that lapse of time will be more than sufficient to put the house in a habitable condition. If I dared, I would ask of the Countess that she would do me the favor to order and supervise the alterations and furnishing of the house, the arrangement of the gardens, and the opening of a passage, if she permits, between her grounds and those of Trouvère. I would be happy to give you *carte blanche* and beg you will allow me to place the sum of fifty thousand francs to your credit. Mr. Livingston should of course have his apartments in the house, as also myself. Thus we will never separate, and the dream of my life will be fulfilled."

"Is this all reality or am I dreaming?" said the Countess.

Olga flew to her arms, and covered her with kisses.

"Do not cry," said she, "it would kill me."

"These are tears of joy, my dear child. Of all that I have dreamed, this my happiest dream is fulfilled. Yes, I am happy. I will supervise the arrangements of Trouvère's house, and you will find everything ready upon your return. So, Mr. Livingston, you intend to come back to us also?"

"Yes, Countess. I could never be separated from Olga. I have interests in America which must be attended to; but I will try to dispose of them and invest the money here."

At this moment, the musical manager was announced. He was ushered into the parlor. The contract was signed, and the day of the departure for America appointed.

A few days afterward, the Countess de Bellevue took her adopted son and Olga to the Archiepiscopal Palace. She informed Monseigneur de Silvereau of the betrothal of the young couple, and he at once begged for the

privilege of personally performing the ceremony. When informed of the artist's proposed American tour, the Prelate said that he would appoint an early day. After his visitors had departed, he wrote immediately a long letter to Queen Dolora's spiritual adviser, and from the Queen Trouvére received an invitation to the Court with his mother, before he should depart for America.

During one of his visits to the seminary, the Archbishop met the Aztec queen, and in the garden held a private conversation with her.

"Madame," said he in a very impressive tone of voice, "we have met before, as you know. I was instrumental in having Queen Dolora invite Trouvére and yourself to Court. Before your departure for America, you must be informed of the great interest Queen Dolora has always taken in your son, but she is not aware that he is also the son of her husband. Dolora is the noblest of queens, and you have wronged her terribly by your magical incantations. I wish you to see her, and when you have felt the sweetness of her soul, I want you to love her and to nourish toward her a good will strong enough to overbalance the evil caused by the ill-will you have projected upon her all these long years."

The Queen, having fully recognized the Archbishop as the white robed priest who had appeared in the flames of her magical fires in the caves of California, commenced to weep bitterly. She felt the dread occult power this priest was wielding. "The great Montezuma has showered so many blessings upon my head of late," she said, "that nothing but feelings of the greatest gratitude can fill my heart."

"It is well," answered his Grace.

At the day and hour appointed by Queen Dolora, Trouvére and his mother were at the royal palace.

Upon being announced, they were ushered into the reception-room where Dolora soon made her appearance. She received Trouvère warmly, and shook hands very kindly with the Aztec queen.

The emotions of the once savage Queen, may be better imagined than described. There, before her, stood the woman whom she had hated with all the intensity her fierce nature had been able to command ; the woman whom she had vowed to kill by means of the most diabolical of her incantations, and would no doubt have succeeded in rendering insane if Bishop Angelo had not interfered in time.

That woman, that royal queen, whom she had vowed to destroy, she now found to be the benefactor of her own dearly cherished son, but entirely ignorant of the relations which he and his mother bore and had borne to the King, her husband. After a few minutes of friendly discourse, during which Queen Dolora had kindly inquired about the young artist's American tour, she sent for the King, knowing, she said, that his Majesty would have a few words of encouragement for Trouvère, whose musical talent he had more than once observed.

Upon learning that the King would soon be in their presence, Trouvère and his mother exchanged significant glances ; the eyes of the Aztec woman emitted sparks of fire.

"His Majesty is not aware that Monsieur Trouvère has found his real mother," said Dolora.

The large door of the reception-room flew open, and the King was announced. Trouvère and his mother were pale as death. Both, however, had perfect command of their feelings, remembering that Dolora was entirely ignorant of the events of the past.

The monarch entered, an officer supporting him on

either side. In truth he presented a most pitiful sight. His limbs were half paralyzed; his gaze idiotic; his whole countenance bore unmistakable traces of deep and prolonged debauchery. After a sickly smile at both visitors, "I thought," he said with effort, "to find Lady de Bellevue here."

"His Majesty does not know, perhaps," said Queen Dolora, "that the Countess de Bellevue is only the adopted mother of Monsieur Trouvére. Now, our young artist has had the good fortune to find his own mother, the lady here present, the Duchess d'Aztec, whom I have the pleasure of introducing to your Majesty."

"What," exclaimed the King with bewilderment, as if a flash of reason had momentarily returned to him; "what did you say?"

"The Duchess d'Aztec," said the American Queen, accentuating her words while approaching one step nearer to the King, and fully exposing her face to him; "and this is my son, your Majesty," she added significantly.

The King appeared for a moment as if a flood of painful recollections crowded into his dulled brain. He looked intently at the Queen and Trouvére, but soon relapsed into his habitual state of semi-consciousness.

"Yes, this lady, the Duchess d'Aztec is Monsieur Trouvére's real mother," continued Dolora. "The Countess de Bellevue adopted Trouvére when he was but twelve years old, on account of the musical talent which he had already displayed at that age. He was a foundling, as his name indicates. He was not abandoned by his mother, the Duchess here present, but a diabolical plot proved partially successful, and the Duchess was kidnapped—Does your Majesty feel ill?"

The monarch stared aghast; his lips blanched, and his features were pallid.

"I will only add a few words," continued the Queen ; "The Belgian King, by royal act and at the instance of the Countess de Bellevue, has transferred the title of Count de Bellevue to Monsieur Trouvére, thus connecting him with his adopted mother. Now I wish your Majesty to confer upon him the title of Duke d'Aztec, in consideration of the blood ties binding him to his real mother, the Duchesse d'Aztec, here present."

"It shall be done," groaned the King.

"And now," she continued, "may it please your Majesty to permit me to do a personal favor to the young artist." As she said this, she proceeded toward the King, unfastened the cross of honor which he wore, and directing her steps toward Trouvére, proceeded to fasten the decoration on his breast. This was too much for the Aztec Queen. She fell prostrate to the floor, weeping bitterly, and kissing the hem of Dolora's garment ; "O Queen ! O Queen ! pardon me !" she ejaculated wildly ; "pardon me !"

Dolora took her kindly by the hand, and raised her to a seat.

The King, now utterly unnerved, was helped from the room, and the visitors soon afterward left the palace, bearing with them the best wishes of Queen Dolora.

"And is that man, that wreck of manhood, my father ?" asked Trouvére, grasping the decoration taken from the King's breast, with a motion as if to tear it away.

"Stay, my son," said his mother, quickly interfering. "It is hallowed by being placed there by the noblest woman that ever trod the earth. Never let us speak of the King again."

Two weeks later, Trouvére, Olga and her father in one carriage, the Countess de Bellevue and the Queen in

another, drove to the Archiepiscopal Palace. It was the day set for the wedding. The attendant invited the visitors into the reception-room, and went to announce their arrival to the Archbishop. After a few minutes he asked the Queen to follow him, as his Grace wished to see her privately. She followed the attendant and on reaching the Archbishop noticed that he wore the same white robes in which he had appeared in the flames of the altar, destroying the power of her magical incantations.

"I have sent for you to learn the result of your visit to Queen Dolora. What are your present feelings toward her?"

"As they should be toward the noblest woman that ever lived. I do not know what I can ever do, to be forgiven for the evil will I so unjustly nourished toward her."

"Project toward her the very best and most affectionate wishes which your heart can conceive. This you must do twice every twenty-four hours; once at high noon when the spiritual influences are at their height of power, and again at twelve, midnight, when the powers of darkness are nearest us. By doing this faithfully, wishing her health and strength, you will return to her a hundred-fold the vital forces of which you have so unmercifully robbed her in times, I hope forever, gone by."

"O, pardon me!" said the Queen, bowing before the priest.

Putting his hand upon her head, he said in an impressive voice:

"You will now be permitted to enter the inner sanctuary of this place."

The Queen returned to the reception-room, whence an attendant led the bridal party to the ante-room.

Then the Archbishop entered, attired in his sacerdotal robes, and the ceremony commenced. He blessed the ring, placed it on the bride's finger, asked the consent of all, and pronounced them man and wife. He now requested the newly married couple and the Queen to array themselves in white robes which he pointed out to them, and this done, they were invited to enter the holy of holies, the door of which opened before them. Meanwhile, the Archbishop remained in the ante-room with the Countess and Livingston.

Upon entering the sacred place, the three personages observed an old man with long white beard, slight in figure, and austere in feature, dressed in long, flowing, white robes, and seated in an arm-chair upon an elevated platform, seemingly absorbed in deep thought. Strains of ethereal music proceeding from some unknown source slowly aroused him from his meditations.

"Approach," he said, with a sweet but firm voice.

All three, as by a natural impulse, knelt upon the *prie-dieu* before them.

Placing a white band of woven material upon their heads, he said :

"May the blessing of Parabrahm ever descend upon you. The gift of occult perception, which has blessed you from birth, has placed you among the elect. Your powers for good will be great if you listen obediently to the inner promptings of your souls. Look steadily upward." Turning to the newly married couple he said : "Lead pure lives ; for the holy sacrament of matrimony is the holiest sacrament of all, and far from causing impurity to the pure, enhances the highest and most spiritual qualities of our being. Love one another with the spiritual love which is that of the angels, and the spirit of Parabrahm will ever surround you."

Then, holding the ends of the woven material on the heads of those before him, he continued in a deep and solemn voice, while the mysterious music still continued, but in deeper and more solemn tones:

"Ô, Parabrahm, descend upon these favored ones; enwrap them in thy divine aura; that they may forever partake of thy eternal verities."

"So mote it be," answered a mysterious voice.

Looking up, the three beheld the old man enwrapped with radiance like a shining sun. Utterly dazzled they could see him no longer. The door of the ante-room opened, and the bridal party withdrew.

The Queen and Livingston remained at the seminary. Trouvére and Olga repaired to Choquier.

That very night, the eyes of the clairvoyant could have seen the bright hosts of the Elohim, hovering on white wings over the *petit château* on the beautiful shores of the river Meuse, and as in time of yore they addressed to heaven in hymns of praise the prophetic words:

Angelus Domini annunciavit Mariæ, et concepit de spiritu sancto.

One week later all those whom the reader has thus far followed in their career were in mid ocean, on their way to America, save the Countess and the Archbishop.

We intend to follow Trouvére de Bellevue through the musical triumphs still awaiting him in the New World, and to accompany the Aztec queen to the wild and mysterious region of Yucatan, whither she intends to direct her steps and claim her share of the untold treasures hidden by the high priests of Montezuma.

We will also follow Bishop Angelo whithersoever the Masters may lay out for him a field of action, and his career cannot fail to prove replete with occult developments of the most interesting and perhaps startling character. But these will be necessarily comprised in the material which will form the sequel to this work.

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